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NOTES OF THE WEEK

THIS is a grave week for the Government and the country. In both domestic and international affairs they are faced with difficult and delicate problems. By the time these words are read the Geneva tangle will probably have been unravell'd; but the situation with which the Government is brought face to face by the publication of the Coal Commission's Report will need weeks of very hard thinking indeed and the exercise of all the diplomacy and will to peace that can be summoned if a successful outcome is to be reached.

A NATIONAL DOCUMENT

We have not the time to deal with the Report at all exhaustively in this issue: detailed consideration must be deferred until next week. But it can be said at once that it is a remarkable monument to the thoroughness and whole-hearted industry of the Commissioners. Whatever the upshot of the situation as presented in the Report may be,

these four men have earned the gratitude of the country. We strongly deprecate the comments which have already begun to appear in the Press characterizing the Report as favouring, on the balance, this or that side. The Commission was conducting its inquiries not for miners or owners, but for the nation; it was out to save the industry, and whether the methods it has propounded for attaining that consummation happen to give miners or owners the better of the bargain is neither here nor there. Everything would be lost if during the six weeks left for agreement the Press or the public were to consider the matter in a partisan spirit.

ITS EDUCATIVE VALUE

Fortunately, there is little fear of that attitude being adopted by the public. Whatever the miners or the mine-owners may say, the country as a whole has received the Report of the Coal Commission with admiration. The three hundred lucid pages in which it is embodied bring into manageable focus all the main problems of the British coal industry. Such a survey, often attempted before, has never

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yet been carried through so comprehensively or with such impartial candour or in a spirit at once so practical and so sympathetic. The Government has done well to sanction its publication at the possibly uneconomic price of one shilling. The more widely it is read and the more deeply it is pondered, the more the essential facts and difficulties of the industry become familiar to our people, the better will it be for the nation and for the owners and the miners. One thing the issue of the Report may almost be said to have achieved already. By bringing out the deep complexities, the far-ranging implications, of the coal question it has gone far to kill the idea that the problem can be solved by violence and upheaval. It ought to make a national strike an impossible crime against common-sense.

SOME MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

On those aspects of the problem with which the general public is most familiar the Commissioners have reached some definite and unanimous conclusions. They are against nationalization of the mines, but they favour the State purchase of royalties. They are against changing by legislation the existing working day, but they recommend such an optional redistribution of hours, with an extension of the multiple shift, as will make five days do the work of six. They are against any reduction of the basic wage rates, but they advise the immediate revision of the percentage addition granted in 1924 during the boom period of the Ruhr occupation. They are against a renewal of the subsidy in any form or for any period of time. They favour the amalgamation of collieries and the removal by legislation of unreasonable opposition to any given project of fusion, but they are against State enforcement of groupings for which there is no local inclination. They urge the industry and the Government to combine on much wider schemes of research than have yet been undertaken, and they press upon the owners the necessity of setting up collective selling agencies and of sharing profits with the miners.

DARK BUT NOT HOPELESS

The Report, while inevitably gloomy, is not a document of despair. The Commissioners have learned enough to be chary of taking either the Association or the Federation at their face value. They are convinced, and quite rightly, that there is a much greater spirit of goodwill in the day-to-day workings of the industry than the official representations would lead an outsider to imagine; and they hand out to the propagandists on both sides a few judiciously paternal admonitions. But the hard economic plight of the industry at this moment is something they do not blink. That many collieries will have to be closed and many thousands of miners thrown out of work is one of the distressing but unavoidable features of the only kind of reorganization that can set the industry on its feet. The Commissioners have striven hard to outline both the temporary and the fundamental remedies. We are not altogether sure that the former can be effective unless the subsidy—much as we hate it—is continued, although the economic arguments adduced against the subsidy by the Commissioners are unanswer-

able. But we have great hopes that if their suggestions for the future are accepted and acted upon by both sides with intelligent good will the industry may again become prosperous and self-supporting. Meanwhile the Government should at once adopt the Report and give an earnest that it means to work its recommendations.

NATIONALIZATION

In rejecting the idea of nationalization the Commissioners lay stress on a point that in this REVIEW we have often urged—namely, that for the Government to own and conduct an industry which enters largely into international trade is not merely to incur but to invite hostility and reprisals abroad. It is one thing for the State to operate a utility service that affects none but its own citizens. It is quite another thing for it to produce and market a commodity and sell it to foreigners. The British Government peddling coal abroad, whether it carried out the transaction directly or indirectly, would rouse a storm of criticism and resentment that would infallibly lead to retaliation and a bitter ill-will. It was so in the years immediately following the Armistice when Government-controlled coal was sold at prices that made the Belgians and the French and the Italians deservedly hate us. Apply nationalization to any product that is freely exported and you have set a sure signal for international strife.

GENEVA

Events at Geneva, after hanging fire throughout the week, partly owing to the intransigence of the various Powers seeking admission to the Council, partly to the absence of M. Briand, are now likely to move to a swift conclusion. It is impossible to be certain before the event what will be the result of the week's conferences and tea-parties. Spain has held out obstinately for a place on the Council and has threatened to oppose Germany's election if her demand is not granted, and even to withdraw from the League; Brazil has likewise made a determined effort to gain admission; Poland, in the person of M. Skrzynski, has been inclined to adopt a more reasonable attitude; Sweden has remained adamant—as has Germany herself—on the question of Germany's sole and unaccompanied entrance.

VICTORY FOR JUSTICE

Through it all Sir Austen Chamberlain has passed from lobby to lobby diffusing his celebrated Locarno spirit, spraying disinfectant on the blight of international dissensions. But he seems to have held out quite firmly for keeping to the original bargain, that Germany should enter the Council alone, and it now seems tolerably certain that his view—and the unanimous view of this country and the Dominions—will prevail. So will end satisfactorily a situation that had at one time all the makings of a serious European dispute liable to wreck the League. And even now, what harm has not been done by the wounding of national feelings? Our Geneva Correspondent deals elsewhere in this issue with the situation as it stood earlier in the week.

THE FRENCH CRISIS

M. Briand is back in office, but how long can his Government last? It was formed hastily in order to allow him to represent his country officially at Geneva. The one stable element in French politics is the refusal of the deputies to vote heavier taxation, and this fact and the constant changes of Government which it entails are ruining French credit abroad. The *Temps* asserts that each day of delay in balancing the Budget costs the country twenty million francs. Ultimately, of course, Frenchmen will have to pay much heavier taxes to meet their deficit, but this consideration does not seem to worry them, or those of them who are so busy robbing the Chamber of what dignity and prestige it ever possessed.

INCITEMENT TO MUTINY

What Mr. George Lansbury says one week-end need not as a rule very seriously engage our attention the next. His preposterous belief that the armed forces of the Crown are the army of Capitalism; his fear that this or any other Government may order soldiers to shoot down workers guilty of nothing worse than a difference of opinion with employers; his hope that soldiers and sailors and airmen can be taught to take their orders from mass meetings at the Albert Hall: these are beneath comment, so long as we consider Mr. Lansbury as an individual politician with a particularly large bee in his bonnet. But Mr. Lansbury is no longer a mere back-bencher. It is true that the party which has advanced him to its front bench, acknowledging him as one of its leaders, has thrown him over on his proposal to reduce the Navy to vanishing point. But so long as it gives him place among its leaders it must bear some responsibility for his foolish utterances. If it does not very thoroughly dissociate itself from incitements to mutiny, it will give colour to Mr. Horrabin's proud claim that "the whole Labour movement is seditious"—a libel, but one that now needs contradiction.

THE FUTURE OF BROADCASTING

The scheme put forward by the Broadcasting Committee is an ingenious compromise between leaving broadcasting in private hands and totally officializing it. The new body controlling it is to be the British Broadcasting Commission, the members of which will be representative, not of State departments or special interests, but of the general public, though the Postmaster-General will answer for the Commission in Parliament. But, admitting the merits of the scheme, it remains difficult to see its necessity. By general consent, the British Broadcasting Company has done very well. No doubt the power of communicating simultaneously with enormous numbers of people throughout the country is open to abuse; but it has not been abused; and if it were, the peccant company could be called to account. Commissions operating under the State are not the proper agents for supplying the public with entertainments. The State has already far too many responsibilities, and we must deprecate further encroachment by it, however well intentioned, on fields which are properly those of private enterprise.

THE TELEPHONE

The jubilee of the telephone comes pat on the first sustained conversation that has ever been held across the Atlantic. Thus far has Graham Bell's invention been developed in fifty years. In another half-century it may be as natural for an Englishman to talk to a friend in Pekin as it is for him to call up his office or his home. There is, however, this danger—that the Government, vitally interested in old-fashioned methods and with enormous sums invested in plant that must soon be obsolete, will do what it can to restrict and discourage wireless telephony. That is the worst of State trading. It is always ready to sacrifice the public convenience in the interests of its own monopoly. To protect the State-owned telegraphs it first laughed at the telephone as an interesting toy, then became frightened by its popularity, then deliberately tried to "stunt" its growth, and finally annexed it for itself. One consequence is that there are about nine times as many telephones for every hundred of the population in America as in England.

THE SCANDAL OF CITY FIRE INQUESTS

An astonishing state of affairs is revealed by recent proceedings in regard to a case of fire in the City. It appears that anyone who is unfortunate enough to have a fire on his premises in the City may, without any of the preliminary inquiry which protects the ordinary prisoner, and without any such *prima facie* evidence as a Grand Jury requires, and indeed without any definite charge being formulated against him, be burdened with the guilt of arson. Nothing of the sort can happen anywhere else. This state of affairs is peculiar to the area coming under the City of London Fire Inquests Act. There may or may not be reasons for requiring an inquest on every fire. There cannot possibly be any defence of the procedure which, in that area, deprives the victim of a fire of all the safeguards which the law elsewhere accords even the most strongly suspected persons. Here is very obviously a case for drastic and early reform.

ANOTHER CHANCE

Stratford-on-Avon has lost its theatre and gained a chance. The family of Flower, who have been Stratford's liberal patrons, were unfortunate in the misuse of their gift by the kind of architecture that flourished in the 'seventies. The result was an eyesore without and a faulty playhouse within. At last year's Birthday Festival Mr. Shaw pointed out how necessary it was to start afresh, and now last Saturday's fire has burned a clearing for a new and better building. Various questions of policy arise. Should the Shakespeare National Memorial Fund abandon all hopes of a worthy site and endowment in London and add its resources to the coming Stratford appeal? Should the new theatre be a replica of an Elizabethan playhouse? There are strong arguments for accepting the latter suggestion. Meanwhile, one thing is imperative: the new building must be in tune with Stratford's Tudor grace, instead of a shrieking discord like the edifice that has been destroyed. We use the word "edifice" with purpose. It is merited.

A MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

THE project of a single Ministry of Defence, which has jumped into such sudden popularity, is no new one. It was first put forward by the late Lord Randolph Churchill, and has with filial piety been supported from time to time by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was again proposed, though in a different form, by Lord Haldane in his general scheme for the grouping of allied departments of Government under four or five super-Secretaries of State. It now commands very general support on the Conservative back-benches, the chief Labour spokesman on Service matters has advocated it, and Mr. Baldwin has promised an early debate on the whole subject. The project of a single Ministry of Defence must, of course, be distinguished from the rival proposal that the Admiralty and the War Office should abolish the Air Department and partition its work between them. That proposal is now dead. The Colwyn Committee has reported strongly in favour of a separate Air Department, and Mr. Baldwin has definitely pronounced against partition.

The project of a single Ministry of Defence may be described as one of a federal union of the three arms under a single constitutional monarch—the Captain of Defence, as Lord Randolph wanted him called—and it eschews partition, annexation, or absorption. If it were adopted, the War Office, Admiralty and Air Department would still continue to exist, but each would be disciplined to a general plan of national defence laid up in the brain of the new super-Minister. It is not hard to understand why a proposal that has languished so long should have come so suddenly to the front. Probably the Admiralty has assisted by its unconcealed anxiety to get rid of the Air Ministry; but the main reason is the profound uneasiness about the cost, and still more the efficiency, of our national defence. A separate Department for the Air was created during the war because it was thought that neither the War Office nor the Admiralty could be trusted to make the most of this new arm, and the same argument still holds. In spite of the lessons of the war, the Admiralty still thinks of defence in terms of battleships, the War Office goes on training armies on much the same pattern as it did twenty years ago, and no doubt twenty years hence the Air Department, which now has the innovating spirit of struggling youth, will see nothing in defence but aeroplanes. Suppose that it were really true, as many maintain, that air-power has now superseded sea-power and that future wars will be decided over the heads of armies and navies without their being able to do anything but watch? Our present organization is such that the whole force of two powerful Government Departments would be thrown against our making the necessary changes. It is not the business of the Admiralty to think of the problem of defence as a whole, but only of ships and mines; nor of the War Office to think of anything but the sort of armies to which it has been brought up. The very efficiency of a Department forces it to think that nothing at all matters but its own work. The instinct of self-preservation is as strong in corporations as in the individual, and there is no vested interest so strong and so resistant to change as that of a zealous Department of State.

There are many points of view from which the project of a single Ministry of Defence can be approached. It is desirable in the interests of economy, for under the present system each Department pushes its own ideas competitively with those of any other Departments, and if the Government is weak it will yield to each in turn. It is necessary in the interest of Parliamentary efficiency, for we cannot properly discuss the policy of one arm of defence except in reference to the others. But incomparably the strongest argument for the single Ministry is that of efficiency in war. As things are, the whole logic of war might change, and it would be no one's business to take note of the change but only to look after those things in which his own Department happened to be interested. It is an alarming thought. And whichever Department was the strongest, most fortified in tradition, most stubborn or skilful in the defence of its interests, that Department would force its policy on the country irrespective of the revolutions that might be going on in thought outside. It is a merciful dispensation of Providence that in military matters nations follow each other like sheep, and spend all their energies in bluffing and being bluffed by each other. But if one nation were to dare to be original and to think for itself, we might in the next war have the combatants fighting with weapons as distant in efficiency as bows from Lee-Enfield. That nation should be ourselves, for the cruellest and longest wars are those, like the last, in which there is the smallest amount of original thought on either side in proportion to the mass of pure physical force. The only humane victories are those of the mind, to which all others are tributary.

And that is the main argument for the single Ministry of Defence. The Government, though uncommitted, has shown some sign of sympathy. Only a single Minister, with a combined General Staff representative of all three arms, can do the work that needs to be done if our system of defence is to be efficient and modern. No Staff by itself can do the work, for war and preparations for war no longer concern a small professional class, but touch the life of the nation at every point. We must have a civil Minister to interpret the civil mind to military men and military thought to the country at large. The argument of which much will be heard is that the work which it is proposed to entrust to a Ministry of Defence is already done in Committee of the Cabinet. To that argument recent history is a complete answer. There was a Cabinet Committee of Defence before the late war, but not a single idea is traceable to it. The outbreak of war found it still undecided, not as to the minor details, but on the general strategical ideas on which we were to conduct it. Peace, instead of completely revolutionizing our ideas about war, sees the reactionaries still obstinately entrenched. There are still people in high place at the War Office who believe in cavalry; millions are wasted annually in triplication of work between the three arms and on engines of war which everyone knows are already obsolete and stand in no sort of relationship to the real problems of defence. No one disputes the internal efficiency of either Admiralty or War Office, but there is a widespread uneasy feeling that the departmental wheels are merely revolving and not carrying us anywhere that matters. No Cabinet Committee, composed of Ministers each

of whom has his own Department, and presided over by a Prime Minister who is overworked even by his general oversight of the main problems of the day, will ever contribute anything worth while to this problem. It is a work for one man engaged continuously in the one great task of rising above details of administration and seeing the problems of defence as a whole. It is not work for spare time, odd moments, and occasional meetings.

It is to be hoped that the Government is giving its most favourable consideration to this project. On it depend our chances of really effective economies, of efficiency in our military organization, and, should war come, of victory without ruin.

THINGS WE OUGHT TO KNOW

THE results of the first of our literary competitions have already been reported upon by the Saturday Reviewer responsible for setting it, but there arises out of that recreative competition a serious question which seems to deserve discussion at some length. Readers, it will be remembered, were invited to set questions which should test the general knowledge of an intelligent and educated adult. It was very curious to see how competitors, in endeavouring to test the general knowledge of others, revealed their own conception of the things that it is necessary, or at least becoming, to know. Had the competition been published in one of the popular journals there would, no doubt, have been still greater concentration on a certain class of facts, but even among readers of this paper there was clearly a fairly general inclination to assume that the possession of mere facts is of high importance. If a score of journals and periodicals of different grades were to invite their readers to send in similar general knowledge questions, it would be possible to say with some confidence what mental furniture this nation expects of its better members, and so to define what it understands by education. But even without such an inquiry there is evidence that, while many people have an exaggerated reverence for the mind full of facts, many others are not at all sure what sorts of knowledge ought to be the common property of all grown-up and educated citizens.

Certain political facts it is obviously necessary to make common to all who share in the political life of the nation. They are, however, hardly the facts which such examination papers are framed to elicit. Among necessary but neglected facts might, for instance, be included that to which Tocqueville pointed when, with a pardonable extravagance, he denied that there was any such thing as the British Constitution. A sense of the sketchiness and extreme flexibility of our Constitution, as contrasted with typical Continental and other written Constitutions, may be the beginning of political wisdom. To go a little deeper, it would be a fair test of the citizen's possession of the minimum of knowledge requisite for discharge of his duties as a voter to ask him whether he is aware that the issues submitted for democratic decision are, here and everywhere else, always and of necessity formulated by oligarchies, and would never exist as issues at all if it were not

for such formulation. Again, it would be a pretty shrewd test to ask him whether the restrictive legislation so characteristic of our time is truly modern and truly democratic in any honourable sense, or merely an unconscious imitation of the fantastic legislation of the decadence of the classic civilizations and a contradiction of democracy. Or, passing to social questions, it would be fair and useful to ask him whether, when he discusses prohibition, he is alive to the profound differences between the former American, the present French, and the traditional British methods of using "alcoholic" beverages. Whatever else he may know, the man who supposes that rye whisky gulped neat and followed by a "chaser" of water, a first growth of Médoc, and the ingenious post-war substitute for old-time British draught beer are all just "alcohol" is an uneducated man. Uneducated also is the person who is unaware of the most distinctive achievements of the race to which he has the honour to belong. Anyone who is ignorant of the truth that the highest energies of this people have been devoted to the production of lyrical poetry, as well as to navigation and the building up of an Empire which it does not understand, is a failure under the test of general knowledge. Again, he is a failure if he does not know that until the other day one of the chief industries of this country was the production of "characters," of men and women of humorous or formidable idiosyncrasy, the kind of people who, in the days of the Grand Tour, left Continental observers under the impression that the British were invariably a little mad.

Another kind of test, and this by itself might suffice. Anyone who is incapable of making out a reasonable, though not universally acceptable, list of, say, the twenty greatest people of our race now living is uneducated. Strange things would happen if this test were freely applied. Not long ago, a week or two after the death of a very great Englishman, to whom several widely read papers had paid due tribute, five persons in some sort associated with literary matters happened to be together, and, one of them saying something about Doughty, it was found that three of them had no notion at all about him. It is really more important to be aware that a great man is, or has been, in our midst than to know the exact circumference of the dome of St. Paul's or the name of the architect of the Houses of Parliament. But perhaps, after all this emphasis on knowledge, it would be well to insist a little on ignorance. Willingness to remain ignorant of things which the individual cannot relate to his ideas is one of the signs of intelligence, as avidity to collect all sorts of facts, to keep them jumbled up in a mind which cannot use the half of them, is the mark of one of the worst kinds of stupidity. The modern reluctance to be ignorant of anything which can be got out of the popular papers is a lamentable phenomenon. After all, when the minimum of knowledge we all need to have in common has been acquired, the individual mind must choose according to its needs, which will not be precisely the needs of any other mind. There cannot be any standardization in the intellectual world. Yet we seem to move towards it, more and more people knowing the same things and being ignorant of the same things, because they draw mental sustenance from the same or very similar sources.

AT GENEVA

[FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT]

Geneva, March 9

THE Secretariat of the League of Nations, like most other offices, is not generally overcrowded on a Sunday morning. When I reached the third floor, which is the home of the Information Section, on Sunday last I was therefore astonished and dismayed to find before me a large queue such as one expects for the first night of a musical comedy. This queue differed from those you see in Shaftesbury Avenue in that it consisted almost entirely of men—of journalists from all over the world who, like myself, wanted tickets to attend the meetings of the Assembly and the Council. They were less patient than the ladies in the London queues, and grumbled because they had plain cards instead of barred cards or pink cards instead of white cards. But a couple of efficient young ladies, with a card index of newspapers before them, plodded patiently on, showing no patience with the impatient, but unlimited patience with the patient and polite. The problem of accommodating the Press for this brief Assembly is almost insoluble, for, besides the ordinary contingent of journalists, there are upwards of a hundred Germans who have come to watch their delegates welcomed into the League of Nations.

When will this welcome be? The most accomplished crystal gazer of the East might hesitate to reply. When we had obtained our tickets from the Secretariat we crowded along to the Hotel Beau-Rivage in search of news. For upstairs, with Sir Austen Chamberlain, were M. Briand, Dr. Luther, Herr Stresemann, Signor Scialoja and M. Vandervelde, all trying to agree without budging one inch from their own positions. When they emerged from Sir Austen's room and came down into the hall one could see that they had had a difficult day. Dr. Luther looked sulky, and M. Briand smiled away at him as if to say: "However many unpleasant things I may have said to you and you to me, let's pretend to all these journalists that we are the best of friends." But Dr. Luther showed no interest in games of make-believe and hurried off to the solitude of his hotel. Sir Austen Chamberlain and M. Briand both gave interviews, but said very little at considerable length. In justice to them, it must be admitted that the situation is too serious to enable them to talk very freely at this stage.

Sweden seems to be irrevocably determined to vote against any change in the composition of the Council, apart from the election of Germany to a permanent seat, at this meeting. Sir Austen Chamberlain is as vague as ever, but is still fairly confident that the miracle of Locarno can be repeated in Geneva. The difficulty, of course, is that Locarno was confined to words or to generalities drafted in treaty form, while Geneva calls for deeds. Cavour once declared that French logic consists in growing more stubborn, more *entêtés*, when circumstances change. Of a certain type of Frenchman this accusation is undoubtedly true, and this type of Frenchman has been very active of late. But there are others—and M. Briand is probably one of them—who believe collaboration with Germany to be a better safeguard than the letter of the Versailles Treaty. Count Skrzynski, the Polish Prime Minister, seems to be behaving reasonably, and would probably be willing to postpone his demand even for a temporary seat until September if he could do so without too much loss of dignity. The Spanish Foreign Minister looks as though he would be more difficult to deal with, but Spanish attempts at blackmail (in the past by refusing to ratify amendments to the Covenant and now by threatening to leave the League) have lost them the general sympathy. "If they want to leave the League," people say, "let them do so." Their resignation only becomes valid after two years, and before that time has elapsed they will realize that

their absence hurts them much more than it hurts the League. Sir Austen, therefore, need not complete the destruction of the Locarno spirit for the *beaux yeux* of the Spaniards.

In these circumstances agreement is difficult, but by no means impossible. The Germans, it goes without saying, are opposed to any changes in the Council now, but they are willing to discuss the question thoroughly and sympathetically when the ordinary Assembly meets in September. The whole affair would undoubtedly be postponed until then were it not that such a delay may be interpreted as a diplomatic defeat for some and a diplomatic victory for others. It is this wretched diplomatic prestige which so complicates things. But M. Briand's overthrow in the French Chamber shows a way out if the delegates have the good sense to use it. An alteration in the number of permanent seats on the Council is very important—much more important than Sir Austen Chamberlain realized when he first adopted his "hush-hush" policy. The situation in France is so uncertain that it would be only reasonable to postpone the Council issue until a stable French Government had been formed and had had time to devote some attention to foreign affairs. Any attempt to reach a decision to elect any country but Germany to a permanent or temporary seat on the Council now would have such serious repercussions that Sweden, for one, would have the courage to veto it, whatever the consequences. The only thing to do is to postpone every claim, except, of course, the German claim, until September, and to thank M. Briand for so fortuitously giving Poland and Spain an excuse to accept this postponement with good grace.

Unless Cavour was right in defining French logic as a stubborn refusal to recognize a changed situation, unless Sir Austen Chamberlain has learnt nothing at all from the recent criticisms in the British Press—and he spoke on Sunday here as though he had learnt a good deal—the crisis will be happily solved by the mere process of postponement until September. And the people who made the crisis possible will escape much more lightly than they deserve.

CONSERVATISM TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

V

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL CUTHBERT HEADLAM, D.S.O., M.P.

IT is never wise to indulge in prophecy and this is particularly true in the matter of politics. There are so many unforeseen happenings which alter the normal course of events and affect public opinion in strange ways that even the most acute and experienced political organizer may well form an entirely wrong estimate as to the future of the particular party with which he is associated. But although any accurate forecast of the future of Conservatism in this country may be impossible, it is yet tolerably easy to set out an opinion as to the general lines on which Conservative policy should be developed, if the party is to be successful in guiding the democracy of this country through the coming years.

To-day, as in the past, Conservatism stands for the preservation of the Constitution—subject, of course, when expedient, to its constructive reform—and for the maintenance and economic development of the Empire. It stands, too, for the existing social system as opposed to any system of State Socialism or Communism which would substitute State or communal for private ownership and enterprise. But Conservatives must recognize that Parliamentary Government and the whole social system in this country are now on their trial, and that in a time of political and economic unrest like the present no political party can hope to pre-

serve existing institutions unless it is ready to reform and to improve them to meet modern requirements. They must bear in mind that the struggle is no longer between two great parties which, however much they may have differed as to methods of policy, were yet united in an implicit faith in the efficacy of the Constitution, but between two parties each of which is inspired by entirely different social and political ideals. This new situation—due to the rapid growth of industrialism in the last century and to the spread of education and the increased political activities of organized Labour—was already becoming noticeable before 1914. The war and its after effects have immensely expedited the transformation. Great Britain with her almost universal franchise is now a complete democracy and her future is in the hands of the many, not of the few. Socialism offers alluring prospects to the great mass of the people. It presents to them "a view of life" rather than a political creed—for its doctrines, if closely analysed, constitute a religious cult rather than an intellectual conception. It makes an especial appeal, therefore, not only to those who are themselves suffering as a result of causes which they are assured are due to existing social conditions, but also to those who are appalled by the amount of poverty and human misery prevailing at the present time. It is not surprising, when there is so much unemployment and distress, that the Capitalist System should be condemned by those who either do not understand or are willfully blind to the real causes to which the present industrial evils are so largely due. Those who urge that the people of this country are too sensible to be carried away by Socialist propaganda are probably right so long as the Labour Party is content to follow meekly the policy of International Socialism whether of the Moscow or of the Amsterdam variety. But should the British Socialists, in order to effect their ultimate ends, decide to adopt a less revolutionary programme—and there are signs of such a change of policy to-day—he would be a bold prophet who ventured to predict that the mass of the working-classes in this country would not be prepared to entrust their destinies to a Socialist Government. The Conservative Party, therefore, if it is to continue to maintain its hold over the people, must be in touch with, and must gain the confidence of, the industrial democracy. It can only do this by sharing in the natural aspirations of the people for a wider and a better life—by proving to the working classes that they can really improve their status more surely and more effectively under the present social system than by tearing it down and attempting to replace it by some new Socialistic Utopia.

The policy of the Conservative Party, then, must not be merely defensive—no purely defensive policy can ever be successful either in war or politics. Conservatism must no longer be associated with the expression "Die Hard." The stability for which it stands must not spell stagnation. Its aim must be the social betterment of the people, and its legislative programme must provide healthier living conditions, wiser education, and greater opportunities for the industrial and agricultural working-class community. But Conservatives must be true to their principles. They must not attempt to outbid the Socialists in promises, for they are making their appeal not to the predatory instincts of the proletariat but to the common sense and to the natural instincts of mankind.

Conservatives are convinced that the nationalization of all the means of production, distribution and exchange would not be in the best interests of the people of this country. They should make it absolutely clear, therefore, that they will not tolerate the nationalization of industry and that they are fundamentally opposed to any wholesale interference by the State in the private life of the citizen. They believe, on the other hand, that a man works harder and lives more happily if he has his own property, and their object, therefore, should be to enable the wage-earner to become the

owner of his home, and to promote in every way the "occupying ownership" of land. They believe, too, in the worker having a more direct share in his trade than he usually has at the present time, and, consequently, they should endeavour to encourage the promotion of co-partnership and profit-sharing in industry.

There is no doubt that many of the social evils which exist to-day are directly due to the overcrowding of the population in the great towns. The Conservative Party must devise, and carry through without regard to vested interests, a bold and comprehensive scheme for the clearance of the slum areas and for the re-housing of the people. The party must also work unceasingly to enlarge our markets within the Dominions and Colonies so as to promote the development of those countries and to enable them to receive a greater number of emigrants from Great Britain. If the Conservative Party will fearlessly carry through a policy on these lines, there is no apparent reason why it should not remain in power for many years to come. It is at the present time a united party; it represents all sections of the community and is led by a man in whose honesty of purpose the country as a whole has complete trust. Its opponents are hopelessly divided and owe allegiance to a variety of masters.

With a policy of peace at home and abroad, of sound finance and steady social reform, trade should gradually recover, and with a decrease in unemployment the specious appeal of the Socialists to sentiment and class hatred should fall upon deaf ears. The principles of Conservatism are deep-rooted in the minds of the great majority of the people of this country, because they feel instinctively that it is only by the application of these principles in the administration of the country that the continued prosperity of the nation can be assured.

THE LETTERS OF QUEEN VICTORIA

(VOL. II)*

By A. A. B.

LITERARY criticism in England is at a deplorably low ebb, for two reasons: first, because it is badly paid, and secondly because it is deeply and incurably insincere. Matthew Arnold said that criticism must be honest and disinterested. Most of the criticisms which have already appeared in the Press about Queen Victoria's Letters are neither. I don't suppose that one half per cent. of the population have read Buckle's *Life of Disraeli*, or Morley's *Life of Gladstone*. But the intellectuals who review books must be supposed to have read them. They must consequently be aware that these volumes are no revelations and add nothing to our historical knowledge.

Wrong emphasis is as bad a literary fault as can be imagined, and most of the newspapers have gone out of their way to praise Queen Victoria for brains and influence which she did not possess. It is said, for instance, that the second of these two volumes shows Queen Victoria to have been a great foreign stateswoman. The surprising thing is that, considering her position as a Sovereign of what was at that time the greatest empire in the world, and considering her relationships, she had in fact no influence whatever upon the great political events that occurred during her reign. Her grandfather was the King of Hanover, as was her uncle, and her daughter was married to the Crown Prince of Prussia, afterwards of Germany. Her husband was a member of the

* * The Letters of Queen Victoria. Edited by G. E. Buckle. (2 vols.). Murray. 52s. 6d. net.

House of Coburg. If anywhere, Queen Victoria ought to have had a favourable hearing in Germany, and some influence over the policy of that country. As a matter of fact she had none. Victoria was an honest woman, and said openly that Germany was the country of her family, for which she had a natural predilection. At the opening of the Schleswig-Holstein dispute she was pro-German, although not to the length of going to war; but when she saw the design of Bismarck to annex those countries, she began to protest. She wrote familiar letters to the King of Prussia, who was a noodle, and who handed her letters to Bismarck, and we can imagine the sneer with which the man of blood and iron read the Englishwoman's plaintive efforts on the side of peace. Ten years later, at the outbreak of the Franco-German war, Queen Victoria, with all her information from inside sources like the letters of her daughter the Crown Princess, was as much in the dark as a man in the street as to the real origin of the conflict. On the surface it appeared that the French were the aggressors, and therefore the majority of the people with their Sovereign were pro-German. It was not till long afterwards that the world discovered that Bismarck had secretly instigated the Hohenzollern candidature for the throne of Spain, and had mutilated, or forged, the Ems telegram which led to the declaration of war by France. After Sedan and during the siege of Paris, Victoria wrote nice kindly letters to the new Emperor, and his wife Augusta, and to her daughter, urging clemency and generosity upon the conquerors, without the slightest effect upon the conduct of Moltke and Bismarck. It may be admitted that Queen Victoria helped by writing to the Tsar of Russia and to her own Ministers to prevent the monstrous crime of a second war on France in 1875, which there is no doubt that Bismarck contemplated. But the British and Russian governments had decided to stop it, and the man who contributed to the result more than anyone else was Morier.

In the Turko-Russian war of 1877 Queen Victoria took a very violent part against Russia. There can be no doubt that if the Queen had had her way, and had wielded the power which her panegyrists ascribe to her, she would have plunged England into war on the side of the Turk. Lord Beaconsfield has told us that while the negotiations which ended in the Berlin Congress were going on, the Queen wrote to him every day, and telegraphed to him every hour, and this he said to Lady Bradford was a literal fact. But greatly as one must admire the courage, the clear decision, and the determination of the Queen to make England's power felt abroad, I cannot see that her vehement outpourings had any real effect upon the course of politics. Against the rock of Lord Derby's sullen impassivity the waves of royal wrath broke in vain. The Foreign Secretary stiffened his back, thrust out his under lip, and did nothing. Lord Beaconsfield, it is hardly necessary to say, was far too clever to go to war, when he could get what he wanted by threatening to go to war. At all periods of his life Disraeli was under the sway of feminine influence. When he was at the meridian of his career, driving Russia back from the gates of Constantinople, calling out the reserves, summoning black troops from India, and secretly acquiring Cyprus as a

military station, he was in love with three women simultaneously, and all of them, as Schouveloff observed, grandmothers. It may well be that our Prime Minister persuaded himself that his Royal Mistress guided and inspired his foreign policy; but the world still smiles at the delusion.

In domestic politics the strong character and decided views of Queen Victoria naturally had greater influence, though not so much as we are asked to believe. It may surprise those who, like the late Lord Salisbury, were wont to abuse Disraeli for his "leap in the dark" in 1867, that the Franchise Bill was really forced upon the Conservative Party by the Queen, who was determined that this matter, having been played with by many governments for so many years, should be settled. The Queen certainly interfered frequently and forcibly in the distribution of ecclesiastical patronage. She was decidedly Broad Church, and would have liked to appoint nobody but Stanleys and Bradleys, which would have created an uproar. She despised the Low Church as "evangelical trash," and she roundly denounced the High Church party as Romanists in disguise. However, she prevented Disraeli from using Church appointments as a means of political influence.

Most writers of the present day miss the real greatness of Queen Victoria, which was neither political nor ecclesiastical, but social. It was as a great lady who banished from the Court the horrors and scandals of her two predecessors, that Victoria deserves to be placed upon a pedestal in history. Actors, music-hall mimes, tradesmen, those who broke the marriage vow were not received at Court, and would never have dreamed of attempting to get there. License, vulgarity and pretentiousness stood abashed in Queen Victoria's reign, and the subordination which is vital to the existence of society was preserved.

DOUBTING IT

By J. B. PRIESTLEY

EVEN now, late in the day as it is, I know that it would pay. If only I could make up my mind about everything once and for all, strike a mental attitude and never relax from it, set up my own little universe and never catch even a glimpse of any other, I should be more at ease and more confident as a man and more successful as a scribbler. Instead of prattling on week after week, trusting that a bright patch of words here and there will excuse the poor flimsy, threadbare coat, I should be putting everyone in his place, be assured, witty, profound, and all—and here's the rub—at less cost than if I were still jangling my two or three melancholy bells. You have all your opinions there, pigeon-holed, ready to hand, and so all you have to do is to get hold of some poor body's opinion, compare it with your own, point out to yourself and your readers where it differs—that is, how far it departs from the truth, touch off a couple of epigrams, and your witty and yet profound little essay is done. The more confident you are, the less you are troubled with any kind of doubt, the easier it is to be brilliant. With your pigeon-holes ranged at your back, all your opinions in their usual places, you can face the world gaily. Up

pops a question; your hand dives in for the answer, which is where you last left it, and hurls it out, and all the onlookers give a cheer. Your first effort, making your mind up about everything and then having done with it, is almost your last, for all the rest is mere Aunt Sally play. If young writers would only spend about six months, or even only three if they are in a hurry, deciding what they think about everything, ranging their opinions, dried and pressed, in neat rows, putting them where they know they can find them, and then would make up their minds once for all that they are right and can never be proved wrong, that no shadow of doubt need ever fall across their path, then they would not only save themselves endless trouble in the future, but would also find that they had taken a short cut to fame.

This is not a recent discovery of mine, even though, from its worn, familiar look, it should have every appearance of one of my discoveries. I have known it for a long time. If only I could put together, from even the oddest materials, some kind of neat, waterproof little universe of my own, which I could push into people's faces on every occasion when I wrote or spoke, I should become a person of some importance. People would remark: "You know, that fellow's got something to say." Only the other night an American, who was either unusually callous or under the impression that I was a thoughtful dry-goods merchant, said to me: "I can't read your belles-lettres writers. They don't seem to me to have anything to say." And, of course, he was right about some of us. I know only too well that I have nothing to say. I may assume, for trade purposes, a dogmatic manner now and then, but actually I have fewer hard-and-fast opinions than the ordinary stockbroker or tea planter, and do not know my own mind as well as they do. Heaven knows that I have tried, yes, for years, to settle everything, religion, philosophy, politics, economics, and what not, and have done with it, so that I could be ready for any emergency, and instruct everybody, and say the same thing over and over again but more brightly each time, until at last people recognized me as the leader of one school of thought, and the university extension lecturers, and after them the literary historians, gave my attitude a label and, out of their love of labels, devoted much time and space to my message and influence.

But no, try as I may, I cannot strike an attitude and keep to it rigidly; I cannot arrange my opinions and then pigeon-hole them. I forget what my attitude is and then either strike another one or do without, just go mentally lounging about, as it were, settling nothing for anybody. My opinions, instead of being there, neat and handy, ready for me at any hour of day or night, are never the same size and shape for two weeks together; some swell terrifically, others flow into one another, and others again dwindle and dwindle until they finally disappear. Then there are some subjects, very important ones, too, in which I simply cannot arrive at any conclusions, for every different attitude, every different opinion I meet seems equally right—and then equally wrong. It is not, you will understand, that I am indifferent and ignorant, content to let others search for Truth. I have read all the books, stacks and stacks of them; I have thought and thought; I have argued in all manner of places with all

manner of people. But it has always been the same, for just when I think I have settled everything, once for all, and see exactly where we all stand, doubts of every kind come creeping in, eating through walls and ceilings and floors, and very soon my fine structure, in which I had meant to pass the rest of my intellectual life, is a tattered little ruin in the mist. And instead of doing the honours, seated at the head of a long and gorgeously appointed table, there I am, grubbing in the rubbish heap, all that is left to me, for a dismal little ironic jest or two, a possible fine phrase.

When I am casting about for a scapegoat, I sometimes wonder whether I ought not to blame my elders, the admired writers of my youth. If they had been a little less cocksure, might not I have achieved a little more certainty? It is true that their unflinching confidence, their freedom from any kind of doubt whatever, showed one at what to aim, the road to travel; but I cannot help thinking that it was they who prevented me from arriving anywhere. They were all so sure. When I think of the writers who were all-important, to me and most other people, during the decade before the war, who hypnotized me then and charm me still, Blake's couplet comes to my mind:

If the sun and moon should doubt,
They'd immediately go out.

These writers, fortunately for us, their admirers, had certainly no intention of going out. In the days when Mr. Bernard Shaw was as busy obtaining publicity as he is now complaining about it, did you ever catch him doubting? Did you ever suddenly turn a corner and come upon Mr. Belloc murmuring to himself: "I'm puzzled about this. There seems something to be said for both sides"? There was never a moment when Mr. Chesterton, to our delight, let it be said, did not know exactly what he thought about everything. Mr. Arnold Bennett, as he told us himself, did not agree with Mr. Chesterton and seemed to view his mental processes, or—to put it in the quaint dialect of the Five Towns—the functioning of Mr. Chesterton's intellectual machine, with considerable suspicion; but, on the other hand, Mr. Bennett himself had clearly never allowed the least shadow of doubt to enter his mind, but had lived all his days, serene and confident, with Truth. Mr. Wells, so far as I can remember, never agreed with anybody and would put them into his novels to tell them so; but though he was always changing his mind, he always changed it decisively, with a click, and was absolutely certain each time that the last secret of the universe had been revealed to him. A happy cocksureness was in the air and all the papers.

Faced with all these gifted and dogmatic gentlemen, the darlings of his days, the inspiration of his nights, what was a poor lad, anxious to get the universe settled, to do but to go gaping from one to the other, stunned by their untroubled confidence in themselves, now accepting one set of opinions and now accepting another set of opinions. They were all equally certain (they are yet, but that is nothing, mere habit) and they were all different. You had the choice of half a dozen different universes, each the one and only genuine article, for whose sake you must refuse all imitations. Obviously they could not be all in the right, though each one may have taken hold of some little portion of truth. Just as Hamlet dis-

covered that one may smile and smile and be a villain, so, too, I found that one may write and write and yet be in the wrong; that it is one thing to believe, and constantly to proclaim the fact, that Truth dwells for ever in your study, and quite another thing for the lady actually to be there at all times and seasons. I began to wonder, and—alas!—I have been wondering ever since. It is true that certain of my betters, certain antique but not entirely faded figures, such as Shakespeare and Cervantes and old Montaigne, sometimes seem to me to be mere wonderers, too—fellows who did not know their own minds—but can I honestly find any comfort in that fact? They were men of genius, and, anyhow, their day was long ago. My day is here, and it finds me with nothing to say.

NOVELIST AND DIPLOMAT

By ERNEST DIMNET

SELECT a lazy afternoon, some Thursday, when since schooldays you have been used to a half-holiday, and stroll down the quays. About a quarter to three you will find yourself in front of the Institute and, not having found in the *bouquinistes*' boxes either the MS. of 'Le Neveu de Rameau' or a school book of Renan's with his annotations, you will turn into the profound peace of the Institute courtyard. Gentlemen, some in well-tailored clothes, others in very shabby coats, are talking in small knots, and you wonder for an instant why this place, usually given up to the sparrows and to a sultan of a cat watching them, should suddenly appear so populous: but it flashes upon you that to-day is Thursday and these are the French Academicians, very unlike their portraits on the boulevards, and whispering as they trickle in lest death should overhear what they say.

You push on past the stone-dream of the Legion of Honour palace, past the Cercle Agricole and past the Palais-Bourbon. You feel the vicinity of the Concorde and of the Champs Elysées, an atmosphere of elegance prevails, and you look lovingly at the Quai d'Orsay palaces, so aloof on their green shrubby terraces. Only a quarter-past three; walk in, for this is the kind of day when a chat with your friend, recently promoted from the Belgrade Legation, will be delightful, in his wainscoted office, with the tall trees almost in the windows. Not in yet. So you sit in the so-called office and amuse yourself by watching the stream of people walking along the corridors. There are the authoritative *plantons* who certainly must know the State secrets, and the elegant typists who disdain to learn them; there are the bearded missionaries who come in for passports and look so intelligent and businesslike, and there are society people. Then there are the secretaries and *attachés*, tall, distinguished, as smart as fashion pictures, walking briskly to their offices, from which they know they will issue forth again in little more than an hour, all elasticity and happiness. What charming men! What information! What culture! What exquisite devotion to art and literature! It is surprising that several of these gentlemen should be connoisseurs and collectors, others artists, others literary people. M. Laroche is a poet, M. Claudel is a great poet,

M. Girandoux and M. Paul Morand, who used to work in the same office, are fantastic gentlemen, as Shakespeare calls one of his characters.

M. Paul Morand has recently left for Siam—he was the King's fellow-student at Oxford and will find diplomacy easy—but M. Girandoux is still at the Ministère and produces a book every year. The last one, released not much more than a month ago, gave me a little fright. 'Bella,' the reviewers said, is the story of the enmity between M. Poincaré and the Berthelot family. A ticklish subject, for M. Poincaré is no longer in office, that is to say, M. Girandoux is no longer his subordinate. The critic in the *Quotidien*—the representative anti-Poincaré organ—actually said that Rebendart was an unjust caricature of M. Poincaré. Could this be true? It is impossible to approach M. Girandoux without realizing that he is a gentleman and a man of taste. Had he really made a slip in handling his subject? I have read the book. Nothing serious. And I notice that neither the Press nor the public takes any more interest in 'Bella' as a *roman à clef*. Evidently M. Girandoux had M. Poincaré in his mind when he described Rebendart, and he meant to be extremely nice to M. Berthelot when he set up the Dubardeaus as so many supermen, but being an artist and a fantastic gentleman he made his Poincaré so unliteral that he looks like an 1830 character, and it is in vain that we are told to believe he is true to life. Charlotte Brontë, who was literal, was indignant when she was told that her Madame Beck had anything in common with Madame Héger, who, after all, had often been kind to her in Brussels. On the contrary, M. Girandoux makes no pretence of denying that he has cribbed his Rebendart from the newspapers of the Poincaré period, but we do not believe him: you have too much taste, we say, and too much phantasy to crib anybody; a life-like M. Poincaré would not amuse you, perhaps might even frighten you, so you have played with an imaginary Rebendart instead.

All told, 'Bella' is less a description of politicians than a little gallery of society portraits. M. Girandoux has re-read his Saint Simon, or he has been haunted by Marcel Proust. What interests him is the psychology—every now and then remarkably subtle—of M. de Foutranges, Bella's father, *ce seigneur âgé, triste et bien vêtu*; of the Hebrew banker Emmanuel Moyse; of the d'Orgallesse brothers, two clubmen whose passion is to investigate the reality of scandalous gossip, and who certainly belong to Marcel Proust, even though he left them in his notes; above all, of Bella, the widowed daughter-in-law of Rebendart, with whom the narrator, young Philippe Dubardeau, is supposed to be in love. M. Girandoux, who can be superfluously outspoken—friend of M. Paul Morand—describes the women with whom he is in love with as much suggestive reticence as Fogazzaro. His precious little touches, his far-fetched similes which irritate Anglo-Saxon readers so much, his faun-like capering in the shrubbery round the statue of beauty, his reveries and reminiscences as chaste as those of a lily-white young poet, finally result in something which makes you feel charm as if it really were in the room with you. M. Girandoux can be a wizard indeed.

The pity is that he has the unfortunate gift of recalling talent of the highest order. While

enjoying Bella de Foutranges's rarity, something in the treatment awakens in the stillest strata of my memory the souvenir of another Bella whom I cannot quite locate at first, but whom I know I must rediscover. Bella Wilcher, of course, and in one second I see those wonderful early chapters of 'Our Mutual Friend,' that is to say, the grey of the sky over the broad river and its banks, and life, life, everywhere. There is a carter to whom ten lines are vouchsafed, and you will never forget him or his horse "Eddard." Well, after all, it is no mean praise to have to speak of Dickens when you discuss a Secretary of Embassy.

ON COMPROMISE

BY GERALD GOULD

"THE interruption caused some sensation, but the vicar started a hymn and the incident closed."

A vicar, I read in my paper, was preaching about Jonah, and did not accept the story quite literally enough for a lady in the congregation. She rose to protest. "The interruption caused some sensation." And no wonder. That protest challenged centuries of decorum as well as the novelties of the inquisitive intelligence; it called in question old habit and new thought, things ancient and modern; and Hymns Ancient and Modern served rather as a distraction than as a solution. "The vicar started a hymn and the incident closed." But the incident did not close. Of course, no incident can ever close. The circle spreads, it is never expunged; time, which writes the wrinkles, cannot smooth them out; echo, retreating in delicate diminuendo from the individual ear, keeps its volume unbated somewhere among the stars. We live in a world of beginnings, of what at least must seem to us beginnings, because we cannot tell the cause or the history; we never see an end. We may start a hymn; we cannot close an incident.

"The vicar started a hymn." There can be little doubt that it was an act as graceful as necessary. What, is a congregation to sit for ever discussing Jonah? There are so many occasions in life when a question is raised, too large and stark for solution. The only possible answer is avoidance; not here, not now, can we emulate the law courts of Tennessee and decide officially the credibility of creeds. Let us rather start a hymn.

To know when to press the challenge home, and when to accept the pretence that the incident is closed, is half the art of life. On the one side are impatience and enthusiasm and the generosity of impulse; on the other, tact and disillusionment and taste. On the one side, the fanatic; on the other, the philosopher. On the one side, youth; on the other, age. When youth starts a hare, age starts a hymn.

The matter would be very simple if impulse were always and wholly generous. But it is precisely about the nature of impulse that the scepticism of increasing years is most insistent. We come to realize that the body, tyrant as well as slave, instructs us in self-laudation. When it is youthful it calls egotism courage; when its tissues begin to harden it calls cowardice prudence. That is

why, though exceptions abound, in the main the conflict is set between the generations. The son sees the world as his oyster—he will open it and possess the pearl: as his football—he will kick it where he pleases. The father, having attempted many things and achieved little, and perceiving that the years remaining for achievement are few, is content to wonder whether anything is worth the trouble of achieving. "Who am I," he asks, "to right the old clamorous wrongs, to solve the perpetual mystery?"—or "Who am I, that I should be certain about Jonah and the whale?" There is always comfort in a hymn.

The dispute between old and young, rendered perhaps more acrimonious by the war, is everywhere spoken of as though it belonged peculiarly to our own times. Really and obviously, it is as necessary and permanent a state of man as sexual love or maternal solicitude: a conflict native no less to our arteries than to our societies. We may soften it, we may sweeten it, with general sympathy and personal tenderness; we may exalt it from the level of vituperation to the level of debate; but it will be there.

All this, and more, comes from some young man's pride
Of power to see,—in failure and mistake,
Relinquishment, disgrace, on every side,—
Merely examples for his sake,
Helps to his path untied.

How we would shield that pride if we could!—that innocent and beautiful arrogance, whose very artlessness of egotism, whose very crudity and imperceptiveness, must touch the heart like the tumblings and fumbings of a child! But we cannot, we are helpless: they will hurt their lovely impertinence against the brutality and clumsiness of a world in which we are only too dully and unprotestingly at home. We are helpless, we cannot help them. It is the one ache for which age brings no anodyne. Who would trust to the starting of a hymn for the closing of this incident?

The arrogance, the confidence, the superbness! We are ready with our answer to it:

How should this be? Art thou then so much more
Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst reap thereby?

But we might at least give youth good wishes instead of criticism. The trouble, the unreason, is in the erection of a difference into a controversy. Twenty-five is all very fine for twenty-five, and fifty may be as good for fifty. One ought to accept Stevenson's advice and "travel deliberately through one's ages." It takes all ages to make a world. But fact imposes the conflict which reason rejects. There is a plan to be made, a course to be pursued, a faith to be accepted or rejected; and immediately there are those who will make a disturbance, and those who start a hymn.

Nor dare we flatter ourselves that to divert the issue is to evade the combat. Starting a hymn, we are not thereby above the dust of the battle. In this war, to refuse to take sides is to take sides, for it is against such refusal that the challenge has most angrily gone forth. To sympathize, to abdicate, to wish well, to concede—all these courses are useless too. A soft answer provokes wrath. The young are out for a decision; they cannot know that they cannot have it. The old are touched by the pitifulness of that ignorance. But by the affabilities of the old the young are merely enraged, for they suspect condescension.

The old, in truth, are open to two main temptations. One is the sentimental—to take the fiery realities of indictment and revolt as pretty toys,

which presently will be put away and no harm done. The other is to match egotism with egotism, arrogance with arrogance—to assume that what the years have brought is always wisdom and never prejudice, always the calm judgment and never the gouty irascibility. "Certainly," says Bacon, "the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth." But there are intoxications and intoxications. There is the headiness of the spring air and the nightingale in the wood; there is the intoxication which is poison. And Bacon, who had reason to know, was talking of the latter.

The incident is not closed. The conflict continues, ever waged, ever renewed. Alternately, there is a sensation and there is a diversion. One tries to see the truth of the balance; but probably one is only starting a hymn.

ART

AT THE FRENCH GALLERY

By D. S. MACCOLL

IT is a full quarter of a century since in the columns of the SATURDAY REVIEW and afterwards in *Nineteenth Century Art* I analysed the pseudo-scientific pretensions of "divisionism," and at the same time pointed out that the general inclusion of Claude Monet among the divisionists was a mistake. I was hopeful enough to suppose that the demonstration would be effective and that at least there would be no further confusion between Monet's painting and the "neo-Impressionist" methods. But no: in book and article the legend has persisted, the label was too convenient to drop, and even Sir Charles Holmes, in his recent remarkable book on the National Gallery, still speaks of the "scientific divisionism of Claude Monet." If a painter with such keen painter's and critic's eyes can shut them thus before the pictures, what is to be hoped from more hasty scribes? Divisionism was never more than would-be "scientific" in its substitution of pigments for rays of light, and over the desk of all writers on modern painting ought to be inscribed the warning, **MONET WAS NEVER A DIVISIONIST.** Camillo Pissarro did experiment with pointillism for a time. It is not divisionism to paint the shadowed side of an object with a colour complementary to that of the lighted side: it is not divisionism to vary the tone and tint of the facets of an object as Monet does. Divisionism means attempting to render secondary and tertiary colours by dots of "primary" colours juxtaposed to mix in the eye instead of mixing them on the palette.

It was Georges Seurat who introduced this method in 1886, and perhaps at long last the exhibition in London of a clear example of his procedure side by side with examples of Monet's painting will bring home the difference to the sheep of our pastures. The picture, 'Jeune Femme se poudrant,' will be found at the French Gallery, No. 41. There are the famous dots, not of primaries in the scientific sense, but of red, blue and yellow pigment, and an unhappy method of painting it is, contradicting all natural use of the brush, and resulting, not in increased luminosity, but in disagreeable juxtapositions at close quarters, in dullness at a distance, as if a gentle rain of smuts had descended. Seurat is an example of the havoc that theory can work upon the instinct of an artist. If one believed in neat deductions from heredity, it would be tempting to see the father of the painter, that precise and formal court-usur (and collector of *images d'Epinal*) imposing himself on the more pliant nature of the mother. For the painter who in 1886 broke out into this rash of dry and tedious stippling had only two years before

painted the sky and water of the 'Baignade,' that is now, by the gift of Mr. Courtauld, at the Tate Gallery. They are painted with a delicious texture of touch, neither too liquid nor too stiff, that renders perfectly the aerial colour of those elements and its vibration. Completed as a small landscape the picture would have had the charm of a natural effect. But already the theorist intervened, urging the instinctive painter to add figures of "monumental" scale. The subject, from the beginning, was ill adapted for such a purpose. It is of a type common among the impressionists, a riverside near Paris, with a high sky-line of accidental forms joining as a horizontal the diagonal of the river bank that rushes out uncomfortably at the eye. This disposition, on river-bank, harbour-side, sea-beach, or street pavement, is one of the malignities of natural perspective, and Seurat, who had a poor taste in forms, was not the man to avoid or remedy a lop-sided disposition. Awkward encounters with bollards, with tree trunks, with bustles and hats and bathing drawers had an uncanny attraction for him, no less than badly cut picture spaces. He had arrived, in a theoretical fashion, at one of the principles of design, parallelism of line. In the work of a master this element of repetition and echo plays hide and seek. We are first aware of a strange felicity and lucidity in the images, which seem to belong to the beauties of their own natural rhythms. But when we look for the secret we discover a geometry into which those private rhythms fit. In Seurat's figures there is none of the inner felicity and rich implication; there is heavily wooden or trivial form with a general parallelism imposed like a demonstration, and sticking baldly out. Compare these boys and their paraphernalia with comparable material in Degas's beach scene among the Lane pictures. The two theoretical developments, parallelism of wooden dolls and stippled irradiation, reached a climax in 'Le Chahut.'

Another talent wrecked by theoretical divagation was Picasso's. The delicate line and colour of his early work was succeeded by the inane jig-saw illustrated by one of the pieces shown. We are told that this scissoring of shapes was an invaluable "gymnastic" for a return to representation. What actually happened was rather hypertrophy, as we see in the 'Mother and Child' of No. 33, blown out like a pink bladder in "kolossal" disproportions.

"Plein-air" painting, as Renoir recognized, had many traps for its adepts; sacrifice of deliberate design to "effect" in the snatch at ravishing high-pitched harmonies, illusion as to what one was doing in the out-of-doors illumination, and so on. There was occasional miracle, but also frequent disaster. Monet had his share of the miracles, witness the 'Auteuil' recently lent to Burlington House, the 'Etrepat' in the Sargent sale, and the charming beach-scene in the Courtauld gift. But tuftiness, a small scrambling touch grew upon him. Cézanne revolted against this, with a rude simplification into flattened spaces of tone, blue, green and golden. The recalcitrant matter of trees was his greatest stumbling-block, and his landscape habits rendered him nervously impatient with the human form. The 'Madame Cézanne dans un fauteuil' is not only a botch in drawing, but a failure in colour as well: he must have abandoned it in disgust. His landscape is the rub-in of a promising arrangement.

There is much to enjoy and admire in this exhibition as well as to discuss. Of the soberer old masters, Corot's early 'Honfleur' is the most perfect. An unfinished portrait by Degas bridges the way to modern excursions; the arbour group by Renoir, in which the action of the woman, snuggling on the man's shoulder, is somehow conveyed out of the vague of light with a china-painter's smear and glister; amazing colour-play in two Van Goghs, which would hang better perhaps with enamels than among other paintings, and a Braque which might serve as the starting point for an excellent textile pattern.

THE THEATRE

THE LOOK OF THE THING

BY IVOR BROWN

The Widow's Cruise. By Joan Temple. Ambassador's Theatre.

The Napoleon of Notting Hill. Adapted by L. E. Berman from an adaptation of Mr. G. K. Chesterton's novel. Given by the Play-Actors. Regent Theatre, March 7.

The Cenci. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. The Empire Theatre.

ON the commercial stage appearances tell. It is all very well for Mr. Chesterton to escort us through the back-parlours of Pump Street and for Shelley to play guide to caverns dark as hell. But if, like Miss Temple, you are just writing an ordinary play for the after-a-good-dinner public, you had better be careful. The managers cry aloud, "Let there be sunlight," and there is sunlight. No well-conducted English comedy ever happens in weather that is anything but anti-cyclonic. The plot of that jolly farce, 'The Hottentot,' for example, concerns a point-to-point race. This is the season of those occasions and, since the illustrated papers apparently regard them as matters of supreme import, I can easily learn how the racegoers attire themselves. They go serviceably booted and swathed in full panoply of leather, wool, furs, hides, and rubber. But that wealth and elegance should attire itself in terms of a textbook on economic geography is intolerable to Shaftesbury Avenue. Mr. Lynne Overman rides his great steeplechase across a country-side that seems to have been baked in summer's furnace and the ladies are habited to endure the burning heat of June. A fig for realism! There is the look of the thing.

I am still waiting for the dramatist who will spurn these meteorological inexactitudes. I am still waiting for the realistic programme which will announce that the climatic effects in Act II are by Marsh Damp, Ltd., and that the contract for the ladies' dresses has been apportioned between Messrs. Burberry, Dexter, Mattamac, and Aquascutum. I still, but with no confidence, await the triumph of naturalism that will proclaim the brand of cough lozenge used in Act III and the make of hot-water bottles, quilts, and mustard-plasters employed in the great bedroom scene. Miss Temple, at any rate, is not going to help us at all. She would have us at Capri, an island that I have never visited save in the mind's eye when I studied the methods of imperial diversion employed by Tiberius Cæsar. I am as ready to accept the evidence of the Ambassador's Theatre as the posters of the tourist agencies. I know now that the sea is blue as blue, and that you sit on a colonnade, while an English gentleman with estates in Yorkshire mixes cocktails in a somewhat perfunctory manner to the accompaniment of native vocalists on the beach below. There an English maiden boldly acts up to the belief that a male guest's bedroom is certainly not his castle, and an English wife will look out over the Bay of Naples and meditate upon which of her two husbands she will discard. Perhaps the fun is not so furious as in the days of Tiberius, but it seems a jolly place. There is the sun and the sea, and men in white flannels and men in blue uniforms and ladies in Deauville dresses. Undeniably it looks all right, as right as anything I ever saw in a high-grade American magazine.

For plot Miss Temple has taken a turn in the forest of Enoch Arden. Up turns the vanished husband of Lady Frome, the twice-wed beauty, whose new husband, Sir Theodore, is the worthiest of dull dogs. First husband has been an English poet and is now the idol of Italy (these are pre-Mussolini days) owing to the fact that he failed to cut and run at Caporetto. I doubt whether the high-spirited Fascists will relish this suggestion of the Englishman as prop and pillar

of Italian valour; but no matter. I also doubt whether English girls will relish the appalling portrait of a bold young thing who makes up the party in the Capri villa. The creature's flow of pert vulgarity quite spoiled my sweet content with the spectacle of the Bay of Naples, of Mr. Nicholas Hannen in the uniform of the Italian Army, and of Miss Laura Cowie examining her emotions with exquisite unconcern. The young lady was the very thing for one of our bishops to denounce. She cried out for smackings and grave warnings and outspoken encyclicals. But all Miss Joan Maude's art could not make her company either plausible or pleasant.

And so we come back to the look of the thing. More important than Lady Frome's choice of a mate is the choice of Lady Frome. Miss Laura Cowie enters no play which she does not decorate; her acting here is the gentle emanation of her personal beauty. Mr. Nicholas Hannen plays the part of the English d'Annunzio as though Gabriel were an angel and a particularly handsome member of the species. Mr. Aubrey Smith is a real good English slow-coach built on the best lines. One can bask at this comedy, but I am not at all sure that it could bear exile from the cosy little Ambassador's Theatre and flourish out of the West End sunshine. Put it into "repertory," with a harassed, overworked company and harassed, overworked scenery or curtains merely, and would one feel so kindly about Capri? I fancy not. Only a bigger play could thrive in less congenial weather.

In the case of Mr. Chesterton appearances do not greatly matter. His kind of mind is no fair weather friend, but circles the universe without respect for climatic circumstance. Mr. Berman's adaptation of the Notting Hill saga proved surprisingly lively on the stage, but the play was enormously helped by the dash of Mr. Clifford Mollison's acting. There seems to be nothing which Mr. Mollison cannot act. I have not seen him in Shakespeare, to rule in which kingdom he has a birthright qualification. But I have seen him gay, smooth, gnarled, and grotesque, and I have never seen him bring anything clumsily off. He is not of your actors who need a cosy theatre, trim settings, and the first aid of a valet. He makes the passion wherever he finds four boards, and his impersonation of Mr. Chesterton's Quin was Harlequin in perfection.

The play throws more emphasis on the antics of the king who lets Notting Hill loose upon London than on the Napoleon of those heights. Since Mr. Mollison played the king this was a virtue, and in any case the joke that was, in Shaw's phrase, to be "an earnest in the womb of time" was kingly in origin. Years have not staled the point and passion of Mr. Chesterton's crusade for the suburbs against the city and for the parish against cosmopolis. It is true that Mr. Chesterton has never much increased his stock of ideas, but that is all in accordance with his cult of the backward glance. And his eye never sparkled more keenly in its survey of the vanished world than when he dreamed of chivalry resurgent in the Free City of Notting Hill. Mr. Berman has not let that spark be dimmed. Here fiery logic takes limelight's place, and the canvas can be as drab as you please since the air is bright with the summer lightning of a darting mind.

Mr. Lewis Casson has dressed 'The Cenci' in dark blue for Miss Thorndike's special performances, of which there are two to come next week. Variations of lighting were cleverly thrown upon a simple setting of this colour, and the contrasts between extremes of sensuality and purity were brilliantly suggested by the mingled richness and austerity of effect. Yet nothing, I fancy, will ever make this a play to which many people will turn with a loyalty of affection. It is more horrible than terrible and more didactic than dramatic. I have twice seen the hideous tale unfold itself and twice wondered why I found myself so little concerned by this attack upon authority. One scene of 'Lear' has more power to move than all five acts of Shelley's

manifesto. For 'The Cenci' lacks nature. The Count carries devilry to the verge of absurdity, and Beatrice, betraying Marzio, is an insufferable sight. I cannot think why Miss Thorndike likes the part. It is not her best. Miss Clemence Dane plays explanatory prologue and tells us what Shelley was driving at. It is easier to agree with Miss Dane's view of Shelley's goal than with her high notions of his success in getting, theatrically, there.

LITERARY COMPETITIONS—4

SET BY ANTHONY BERTRAM

A. We offer a first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea for the best verses in the manner of Swinburne advertising a patent medicine. The number of lines must not exceed twelve, and no real medicine, patent or otherwise, may be mentioned by name, though as many real diseases may be as harrowingly described as the competitor wishes.

B. We offer a first prize of One Guinea and a second prize of Half a Guinea for the best Obituary of Henry VIII, in not more than a hundred and fifty words suitable for either a sensational Sunday paper, or a solid and respectable daily paper. No existing journal must be named.

RULES

The following rules must be observed by all competitors:

i. All envelopes must be marked LITERARY, followed by the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to the Editor, The SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2 (e.g., this week: LITERARY 4a, or LITERARY 4b).

ii. Typescript is not essential, provided the writing is legible, but competitors must use one side of the paper only. Pen-names may be employed if desired.

iii. Where a word limit is set, every fifty words must be marked off by competitors on their MSS.

iv. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves to himself the right to print in part or in whole any matter sent in for competition, whether successful or not. MSS. cannot be returned. Competitors failing to comply with any of these rules will be disqualified.

Entries must reach the Editor, addressed according to the rules, not later than by the first post on Monday, March 22, 1926. The results will be announced in the issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW immediately following. The Editor very much regrets that neither he nor the setter of the Competitions can enter into any correspondence with competitors.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS 2A AND 2B

(February 27, 1926)

SET BY IVOR BROWN

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best suggestion of Shakespeare's opinion of Marlowe and of Marlowe's opinion of Shakespeare. These opinions are supposed to be expressed in conversation in the absence of the man discussed, and the date imagined is just before Marlowe's death in 1593. The opinions may be as terse as competitors choose to make them, but in neither case may they exceed one hundred words, i.e., two hundred words is the limit of length for a complete answer.

B. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best rhymed epigram in English on any event during the month of February, 1926. The word "event" may be understood to be of general application and covers any artistic or social as well as political occurrence. No epigram should be more than eight lines in length. Competitors, if they are preparing to dip their pens in gall, should remember that there is a law of libel.

We have received the following report from Mr. Ivor Brown, with which we fully concur, and we have pleasure in awarding the prizes in accordance with his recommendations. The winning entries are printed in full. Will "Coq. of Collyers" kindly send name and address, so that a cheque may be forwarded?

REPORT FROM MR. IVOR BROWN

2A. The entries for this competition were largely on a level and it has been difficult to discover any answers which stood out clearly. One or two competitors endeavoured to render the conversations in the modern idiom while others achieved a modern idiom without, I think, intending to do so. Others wasted their time and space by too much swearing and bellowings after alcohol; the atmosphere might have been taken for granted. The suggestions of some competitors would lead us into the most intricate mysteries of Shakespearean chronology. I take it to be doubtful whether Marlowe lived to see a draft of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and of 'Romeo and Juliet' though, of course, the possibility cannot be ruled out. If plays in those days lay about in managers' offices as long as they do now, there are no limits to the amount of Shakespeare's work which Marlowe may not have seen in one form or another. There was a fair variety in the outlook attributed to the two men, but the majority voted for mutual generosity.

Competitors are reminded that the word-limits set for these competitions are meant to be taken seriously and that they do not improve their chances by writing something like 130 words and then marking them "Circa 70 words" at the close. My first recommendation is for Mr. James W. Turner, whose expressions of opinion seem to me plausible both in matter and form. I am no Baconian and feel a little nervous about his last sentence, but I trust that Baconianism is not its real implication. For second place I suggest "B. C. H." Neither of these competitors wasted time on unnecessary oaths and pot-house brawling. Neither has taken any chronological risks nor dragged in unnecessary characters to make up the dialogue. Several people apparently felt that Ben Jonson could not decently be left out, but Ben was only twenty at the time of Marlowe's death and if he worked in the theatre at all at that time, he would only have been apprenticed and unlikely to have been much in the company of leaders like Marlowe. Honourable mention goes to Lester Ralph, Portia, E. Valder, "Non Omnia," and Miss E. Nesbitt.

THE WINNING ENTRY

Shakespeare on Marlowe

Kit Marlowe. Masterful Kit. He hath the vitality of ten, and our stage resounds with the energy of his heart-beats. Knowledge cannot sate him. His desires dwell with the stars. . . Yet there are corners in the hearts of men. . . Kit cannot enter there. That work is for the creeping mind. . . And his jests? Earth-born. Squibs please these men of all-devouring laughter. . . Language is his, a muse of fire. He hath stormed our stage, after no pretence work. . . Yet storms subside. The swiftest conquest is not most secure.

Marlowe on Shakespeare

The man's companionable, and hath some gift in rhyming, but he's no scholar; reads translations; and lacks divine afflatus. His soul is a kind of alloy to mingle with our sucked essences. Snips from Greene and snaps from Lyly, themes from Kyd and plays from Plautus, and everything of mine, and then "From women's eyes these doctrines he derives." I know not where to have the man. Yet there's something in him. He hath a mind for entrances and exits; knows the stage. He'll serve as stage-crutch for a better man.

JAMES W. TURNER

SECOND PRIZE

Marlowe speaks:

"Young Shakespeare? A forward fellow, but useful, Burbage tells me, in patching of old matter. He'll never go far, but far enough, no doubt, to ape his betters. Has a quick ear for a phrase and a shrewd wit to make it his own, but little skilled in fancy. What I most dislike in the dog is his meanfistedness, every groat saved, shares bought in theatres—what

manner of poet is this that will turn usurer? A fellow devoid of learning, too. O one of the ruck, I tell you, one of the ruck. . . ."

Shakespeare speaks:

"Master Marlowe counts a bare few months older than I, yet already is the world enriched by him. How fortunate is our age from which so bright a star is risen! How fierce a passion, how tender a sweetness, how dark a tragedy hath he already mirrored for his generation! Truly, I would the man kept better company, yet must he ever move as a whale among minnows. And which of us may ever hope to rival him in poesy? The name of Marlowe, I tell you, will be writ large in England when all we lie forgot." B. C. H.

2b. The Rhymed Epigrams on an event in February did not suggest either a wealth of satiric power or a sufficient study of the accepted models. Competitors were too eager to use the full allowance of eight lines. Preliminary clearing of the throat is fatal to the utterance of an epigram, and in some of the attempts four lines were wasted on a survey of the situation. There was not always a sure sense of rhyme. I do not accept "hell be" and "L. G." as a double rhyme, and in no circumstances can the rhyming of "limit" and "in it" be tolerated. As February subjects Lady Cathcart, Mlle. Lenglen, and the athletic members of the Civil Service divided the honours. Sir Alfred Mond, Mr. Lloyd George, and the fortunes of the Liberal Party appealed in a smaller degree. There was an occasional glance at American wrath over rubber and a gibe or two at Geneva. One entrant had a fling at the Poet Laureate, whom I think he maligns when he describes him as "well paid." Another paid us the compliment of making "The Starting of Literary Competitions in the SATURDAY REVIEW" his subject; and his contribution is graceful. "A.A. Le M.S." was at least original in his choice of an event:

Of February's Event I sing,
But not of Maya cities,
Of Mussolini's gestured fling,
Or debts-of-war committees.
For—trust me, there is no deceit;
I'll set my head upon it;—
Jane crossed a February street
In January's bonnet.

But the "bonnet" is surely the last point of feminine attire in which novelty is all. Has not Jane's conservative loyalty to the felt "pull-on" been breaking the hearts of our milliners? In any case I cannot recommend "A.A. Le M.S." for full honours. Lines five and six are stop-gaps for which an epigram should have no room, and the reduction of "February" to three syllables shows in the seventh line that he or she knows better and is a conscious malefactor.

The best of the comments on the Civil Service came from "C. M. F.," whose observation was as follows:

Bribed to be honest? Loud you cry, "No, no!"
"Our Civil Servants could not sink so low!"
Yet see them offered, in their country's name,
Two hundred thousand pounds to play the game!

But this was not as good as her second contribution, which I recommend for first prize, since it has brevity, point, and a well-sustained play on words. For second prize I recommend, feelingly, the excursion into the domestic affairs of this Review by "Coq. of Collyers." Honourable mention goes to Constance Hagberg Wright, "John Amberley," E. L. Turnbull, and D. O'Sullivan.

THE WINNING EPIGRAM

Once, Trojan Helen, playing the oldest game,
By one fond fault set Grecian Courts aflame,
Now, should another Helen's faults be troubled,
Not courts alone, but continents, are troubled.

C. M. F.

SECOND PRIZE

The Editor called his Staff and said,
"You do not earn your daily bread,
Your jobs I could do on my head."
The Staff went white, the Staff went red,

A competition page they started
Which now defeats the bravest-hearted.
Even the Ed., who truly wise is,
Is just content to give the prizes.

Coq. of Collyers

COMPETITION 1A

Will "Midory" kindly send name and address so that a cheque may be forwarded? We regret that we omitted to make this request last week.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AN AGRICULTURAL POLICY

SIR,—In regard to the very useful article subscribed by Mr. C. F. Ryder in your issue of March 6, I agree with him in his points about the farm labourers' conditions; but there are two points that I would raise in connexion with his letter. First, that of "manure." Mr. Ryder is correct in saying that the keeping of pigs is more difficult than of old; and secondly, that sewers are replacing cesspools. In other words, "Humus is difficult to find to-day." Is it not a fact, however, that to-day there are many artificial manures available which give all the necessary and cheaper "virtue" to the ground, though with less humus? In view of the fact that pigs and horses are going into oblivion, is not the "fodder" which is available for them—grass, vegetables, straw, etc.—available for the ground? If manure is rich, owing to the natural process of passing through the system of the animal, is not its cumulativeness recompensed by the "quantity" of uneaten fodder, plus the chemical manure as suggested above?

Is there not an even more important matter, so dear to, and neglected by, the farmer; the saving of devastation by rats? The rat menace is far more disturbing than any other. It is casual in most farmers' minds, but the destruction wrought by them is positive, although the average farmer considers a "saving" as a negative proposition. I have studied the question closely as regards rodents, and support the general contention that rats do all the damage that is attributed to them, approximately one pound sterling per year per tail. There has been much discussion on this matter, owing to the danger of poison and squill. Personally, I have found that Virus, which spreads a disease among rodents and is harmless to farm hands and farm stock, the most effective thing of all. I have heard that this method is doubtful; but I have never found anything to touch it in its deadly effects; and I shall be glad to know if any farmer has found it otherwise, after giving it a trial in sufficient quantities. The farmer can save as many pounds per annum, as he can make, if he looks at the two sides as regards his live stock and arable land.

I am, etc.,

84 High Street, East Grinstead H. E. WEBB

SIR,—What is the function of the State with regard to such a thing as agriculture? In my opinion its function is to create suitable conditions—by education, by experimental stations, and by insisting that it runs its own show—and to give fair opportunities: by legislation, which gives the cultivator more freedom and not more restrictions, by making it possible for as many suitable men as possible to follow an agricultural calling, and by removing any obvious injustices or anachronisms. Those, roughly, seem to me the State's duties. Its rights are only that the cultivator, for whom it takes such trouble to create proper conditions, shall not abuse them by misusing his land and so depriving the community of food and others of access to our limited amount of land. In no normal circumstances is it legitimate to hand over to the agriculturist or to any other industrialist any part



Dramatis Personæ. No. 194

By 'Quiz'

THE RIGHT HON. SIR ARTHUR STEEL-MAITLAND, BT., M.P.
MINISTER OF LABOUR

THE BELLICOSE PORTER

SIR,—Signor Villari is an able defender of Fascismo, but my silence in regard to his letter has been due to illness and not to acceptance of the interpretation of the events he quoted. Signor Villari quotes his book of 1922 as if that were a final arbitrament; but most people's memories are short. *The Times* correspondent "lately in Poland," writing of the Polish-Russian conflict in a letter to *The Times* of July 26, 1920, in an endeavour to make out that the Russian Bolsheviks started the war, made a number of assertions that were in direct opposition to his own despatches from Poland eighteen months previously, from December, 1918, onwards. In 1923 Signor Bonomi likewise published a book, 'From Socialism to Fascismo'—another able experiment in whitewash—for he also had to explain away Mussolini's 'March on Rome.' Italians had probably forgotten, and few people here ever knew, that Signor Bonomi at the 1921 General Election, while he was still Minister of War (a portfolio he had already held for a year—a few weeks later he became Premier) was such an admirer of Mussolini and his following that he was elected for the Mantua-Cremona district on the "Blocco Nazionale" list along with three other candidates of whom two were prominent Fascisti—one of them the notorious Signor Farinacci, now Secretary of the Fascist Party.

Signor Villari enumerates a number of what he calls Red outrages. But I cannot accept his view of the necessary wickedness of workmen's strikes. As *Le Temps* in a leading article said of the recent Parisian shop-keepers' strike: "Ils ont usé d'un droit." And at least it can be said in their favour that the Italian workmen stopped the iniquitous war that the Italian Government had been waging in 1919-20 against the hapless Albanian people. He also seems to think that the Italian Press Censorship was removed shortly after the Armistice and adduces this removal as permitting incitements to Red violence. But I have copies of *Avanti*, of November, 1919—i.e., a year later—with censorship blanks; and in front of me at this moment is a copy (November 2, 1919) of Mussolini's own paper, *Il Popolo d'Italia*, with "45 Righe Censurate" out of a violent diatribe supporting the occupation of Fiume, an adventure which had always enjoyed Fascist approval. This shows that the Censorship was ready to operate when it was deemed necessary. What the people of Milan thought of the provocative words and deeds of the Fascisti in 1919 was shown by the results of the November elections where the Fascisti list was at the bottom of the poll: Mussolini and Marinetti, their leaders, getting only 9,064 and 6,144 votes respectively (insufficient to obtain a seat) while the lowest of the sixteen elected Socialist deputies polled 176,886 votes. By the by, this proves that Dr. Shadwell in one of his recent books is in error in stating that the Fascisti did not form a political party until 1920.

The real scandal of the Fascist outrages is not so much that they were actually carried out, but that the "squadri d'azione" were allowed to arm themselves by the successive Ministries of the post-war period, and that from 1919 onwards these Fascist bands almost invariably enjoyed the benevolent neutrality and on occasion, as at Rovigo and Florence, the active support of the police and gendarmerie. For having swept away those mumbling politicians who permitted this sort of thing while at the same time pretending to be governing Italy on democratic lines, I raise my hat to Mussolini. From this it will be gathered I have very little sympathy to waste on those refugees from Italy, whether they be professors, priests or politicians, who, very silent while the Fascisti were bludgeoning mere working men, later on finding the same methods applied to or threatened against themselves have left their country quickly and from afar off have endeavoured to raise an outcry against the Fascist regime.

I am, etc.,

J. C. MACGREGOR

THE DERBY TIMES

SIR,—Looking at the times for the Derby for the past fifty years, you will find that 2 min. 40 secs. was never beaten till the year 1905, when Lord Rosebery's Cicero won in 2 min. 39³/₅ secs., and since then the times have always been under 2 min. 40 secs., with the three following exceptions: 1909, when it took H.M. the King's Minoru 2 min. 42²/₅ secs. to cover the course of one mile four furlongs and twenty-nine yards; 1924, Lord Derby's Sansovino, 2 min. 46²/₅ secs. (the weather accounted for this poor time); and last year's winner, Mr. H. E. Morris's Manna, 2 min. 40³/₅ secs. I do not include the substitute races run at Newmarket during the war. The two fastest horses that have ever won the Derby are Major G. Loder's Spion Kop in 1920, in 2 min. 34⁴/₅ secs., and Lord Woolavington's Captain Cuttle in 1922, in 2 min. 34¹/₅ secs.—record. This makes me think that the Derby winners since 1905 would have beaten many of the previous winners when most of the times were from 2 min. 40⁴/₅ secs. to 2 min. 56⁴/₅ secs., this being Sir F. Johnstone's Common's time when he won in 1891. It took the Duke of Westminster's great Ormonde in 1886 2 min. 45²/₅ secs. to cover the course.

People say that the time test is no good in horse-racing; the time test in all racing with the exception of boat-racing is a great factor in helping to find out the probable winner. Why are the times so much faster since 1905? Do the jockeys know how to ride better, or are the horses faster?

Now with men, amateurs never knew how to run the quarter of a mile (440 yards) race till the great American, the late L. E. Myers, of the Manhattan Athletic Club, came over here in 1881 and won the Amateur Athletic Association Championship quarter of a mile at Birmingham, on July 16, 1881, in 48³/₅ secs., and made the late W. P. Phillips, of the London Athletic Club, run second in 49¹/₅ secs., time he had never shown before. Previous to Myers's visit we used to make a waiting race of the quarter, but Myers showed us that there is no waiting, it is going all the way, and you will notice that since his day the times are much faster. Is it the same with our horses?

I am, etc.,

JAMES MONEY KYRLE LUPTON

London Athletic Club

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CONCERTS

QUEEN'S HALL. Elena Gerhardt's recital of Brahms, Schubert and Hugo Wolf, on Tuesday, March 16, at 8.30.

WIGMORE HALL. Marcelle Meyer's pianoforte recital, on Monday, March 15, at 8.15. Pougnet Quartette (works by Beethoven, Vaughan Williams and Ravel), on Friday, March 19, at 8.15.

ÆOLIAN HALL. Recital of violin sonatas by Kathleen Parlow and Evelyn Howard-Jones, on Wednesday, March 17, at 8.15.

PLAYS

PRINCE OF WALES'S THEATRE. 'Ashes,' on Monday, March 15.

Q THEATRE. 'Young Mrs. Grimshaw,' on Monday, March 15.

CENTURY THEATRE. 'The Witch,' on Monday, March 15.

LYRIC THEATRE. 'The Best People,' on Tuesday, March 16.

DUKE OF YORK'S THEATRE. 'Life Goes On,' on Wednesday, March 17.

PICTURES

THE GOUFIL GALLERY. Spring Exhibition of Oil Paintings and Water-Colours by James Pryde.

SOCIETY OF GRAVER-PRINTERS IN COLOUR (18 Cork Street, W.1). Exhibition of Original Colour Prints.

NEW BOOKS AT A GLANCE

Notice under this heading does not preclude or prejudice subsequent review.

IN 'Dostoevsky Portrayed by his Wife' (Routledge, 10s. 6d. net) we are given a picture of the novelist by one who was his amanuensis and the general manager of his literary work as well as his wife. The revelations of his mania for gambling, and of his lapses of memory, in which he could not recall his wife's maiden name, together with other curious matter of the sort, should attract the ordinary reader. But, of course, the main appeal is to the smaller public which accords Dostoevsky so exceptional a position as a novelist.

'The Art of Being Ruled' (Chatto and Windus, 18s. net) appears to be a pretext for the delivery by Mr. Wyndham Lewis of his opinions, which are usually strong and often peculiar, on every sort of question, political, social or moral. Leisurely reading may in due course expose a unifying argument. But a preliminary examination suffices to show that the book is a challenge to debate.

'The Worship of Nature' (Macmillan, 25s. net) obviously possesses those qualities which have made 'The Golden Bough' one of the greatest achievements of our time. Sir James Frazer here covers an immense field.

In 'Authors, Dead and Living' (Chatto and Windus, 7s. 6d. net), Mr. F. L. Lucas ranges from Drayton and Donne to Mr. Masfield and Mr. Davies, but also gives us papers dealing with various abstract literary questions.

'An Anthology of Recitations' (Bodley Head, 5s. net) represents the taste, not of its editor, Mr. Percy Cross Standing, but of various well-known actors and actresses. It is extremely amusing to find that Owen Meredith survives among the favourites of these performers, though he disappeared from the shelves of the public thirty years ago. But Miss Sybil Thorn-dike leans to the poetry of Mr. Belloc, Mr. Noel Coward to that of Rupert Brooke, and Miss Fay Compton to the drawing in verse done by Aubrey Beardsley when he wrote his 'Ballad of a Barber.'

'Good Company in Old Westminster and the Temple' (Bodley Head, 15s. net) has been founded by Miss Constance Hill on the recollections of Anne Lefroy, whose father, John Rickman, was more or less intimate with Charles Lamb, Hazlitt, Coleridge, Leigh Hunt. A good deal of the matter may seem almost too familiar for fresh presentation, but no one ever really tires of reading about Lamb; and here there are some well-chosen illustrations to entice us.

'Barye' (Bodley Head, 5s. net), by M. Charles Saunier, is another of those small volumes in which modern French artists are being dealt with by this publisher.

Finally, a book of very wide interest, and very topical at this moment, is Mr. Alan Cobham's 'Skyways' (Nisbet, 15s. net), with a preface by Sir Sefton Brancker.

Messrs. Philpot have brought to our notice the fact that they have purchased the entire rights of English translation of M. Paul G  raldy's poems, and are shortly publishing a volume of these translations. We wish to point out that we had no knowledge of this fact when we set one of M. G  raldy's poems for translation in a recent Literary Competition, and we tender our apologies to Messrs. Philpot for inadvertently infringing their copyright.

We regret that we recently gave the publishers of 'The Law Within' as Stanley Paul and the price as 16s. This book is published by Kegan Paul, and the price is 12s. 6d. net.

REVIEWS

CATULLUS

BY EDWARD SHANKS

Catullus: The Complete Poems. Translated and edited by F. A. Wright. Routledge. 7s. 6d. net.

THERE is one retort which can always be made to translators: If you think it is like that, why did you think it worth translating? Unfair, perhaps: for just as a man will overrate one of his own poems, being conscious only of his first inspiration and not able to see what he has made of it, so he will see in his version only the beauties of the original. Nevertheless there are many translators who, undertaking as they themselves delight to say "a labour of love," do anything but a kindness to the object of their affection: it would have been better if they had dissembled their love and left the volume on the shelves. I do not, of course, mean to say that Mr. Wright has done positive injury to the fame of Catullus. If I say that he has mangled the poems, I speak only metaphorically: the original texts still exist. Moreover, with either astonishing generosity or astonishing innocence, he has printed here a good many versions that are much better than his own—from Crashaw, Swift, Byron, Sidney, Fr  re, and others. But, so far as the work of making a complete translation of Catullus and explaining him to English readers goes, he has made an unhappy failure, and it is rather a pity that English readers should be led to suppose that Catullus was no better than this.

"Poets," says Mr. Wright brilliantly in his introductory essay, "are horn, not made." And after a short historical disquisition he goes on to tell us that Verona was inhabited, at one time and another, by Romeo and Juliet, by Dante in his exile, and by Sylvia, "who was by all her swains so commended." Also "with Mantua, Peschiera, and Legnano it formed the great Quadrilateral of fortresses which, in the first half of the nineteenth century, secured the Austrian hold on Northern Italy." Perhaps it is rather more to the point that its beauty received the approbation of the late Mr. W. D. Howells. But as all these things occurred some considerable time after the early death of Catullus, it is hard to see much point in any of them. When he reaches Sirmio Mr. Wright quotes Mr. Bagot ('Lakes of Northern Italy,' p. 178), and we get that expected sentence of dear familiar mould, "in these surroundings we may suppose that the young Catullus spent the summer and autumn of the year, and that the busy city of Verona was his home during the winter and spring." So we may, but what of it? We do not gain much by doing so. In this manner Mr. Wright disports himself among the few known facts of the poet's life. Lesbia "in appearance . . . doubtless resembled one of those ripe Italian beauties whom Ingres took for his models in the 'Bain Turc.'" Again—"the little book [Catullus's first], doubtless, in general was warmly received." It is a good rule to beware of a biographer when he uses the word "doubtless": he is almost always saying something which we have no particular reason to believe. When he comes to a critical estimate Mr. Wright makes the startling declaration that there are twelve poems by Catullus which "would suffice to give him a place by the side of de Musset, Keats and Burns"—which sounds like a difficult and extraordinarily uncomfortable position to occupy.

When we come to the translations themselves, it is evident that Mr. Wright is no better a hand at rendering his poet than at describing him. Here are strange changes—not the least surprising being the translation of poor Lesbia's sparrow into, of all birds, a canary, which would probably have distressed her and her lover even more than its death. One might as suit-

ably change the doves of Venus into penguins. Certain difficulties, of course, are unavoidable in any translation: Catullus cannot go forth to our modern world just as he is save in "the decent obscurity of a learned tongue." But it is a little absurd to boast of the work as being "unexpurgated, with slight modifications in the case of a few poems" in view of the omission of that single, terribly right word which makes 'Illa Lestia' a great poem. Where Mr. Wright is not pursued by these external difficulties, he creates new ones for himself. He has an extraordinary fondness for jog-trot metres such as this:

Though she's always reviling and speaking me ill,
I'll be hanged if she is not in love with me still.
How's that? you may ask. Well, I do just the same,
I curse her, yet burn with a true lover's flame,

which is not a pretty collocation of syllables. It is like passages which irresistibly move one to inquire why, if Mr. Wright thinks that is the impression these pieces should make on the reader, why in the world was he at the pains of translating them?

Catullus, most human and most modern of all the ancient poets, deserves, if any, a better presentation than this to the readers of to-day. Second (if we know enough of her to reckon Sappho) in the line of the great personal poets, he was the predecessor of the Shakespeare of the Sonnets, of Heine, of Mr. A. E. Housman. How many a schoolboy (I was one) has not, on catching his aroma, secretly worked harder at his book in the hope of coming a little closer to this brightly glowing flame? For Catullus starts out of his pages at you and you know something of him, while you are still only guessing at the meaning of his poems. He loved passionately and suffered horribly. He was witty and virulent. He was courageous, too, for he cared not against whom he threw his savage lampoons. He was petulant and wayward and brilliant, and he loved beauty and often achieved it. We do not, with all respect to Mr. Wright, really know who Lesbia was and, even if, as Apuleius a long time afterwards tells us, her name was Clodia, there is but slender reason for thinking that she was the sister of the celebrated and amusing Clodius, who drove Cicero into exile. But she stands out in the small group of poems written about her as a real woman, infinitely more real than the Delia of Tibullus or the Guthia of Propertius or any of the loves of Horace. In like manner Catullus's friends have immediate reality and so has the life he led, in such reflection of it as we can see in, as it were, the fragments of a broken mirror. The comrades who are forced to look for invitations in the street, the Licinius with whom Catullus spent his leisure writing light-hearted things on their tablets, the mistress of Varus, who teased the poet into boasting that he had brought back eight litter-bearers from Bithynia—these are as live and real as the people we see about us in the streets to-day. And because Catullus is, if not the latest poet of antiquity, certainly the most vivid and personal, it is a pity that his individuality should be mired by mediocre translation.

NECKER'S DAUGHTER

Madame de Staël. By David Glass Larg. Translated from the French by Veronica Lucas. Routledge. 12s. 6d. net.

IT may be doubted whether anyone will succeed better than Mr. Larg in explaining the amazing contradictions of Madame de Staël's life and character. Certainly no one has brought acuter perception or greater industry to the task. In this volume he carries his patient and penetrating analysis to the year 1800 when, at the age of thirty-four, Madame de Staël has achieved full knowledge of herself as a woman and a writer, when she had become "a conscious personality, capable of action." We are warned

—and in the light of her history we are hardly in danger of neglecting the warning—not to underestimate the importance of this result. The first phase of her career is made psychologically intelligible by Mr. Larg's subtle study. One by one he examines her works together with the letters and diaries, and by the patient accumulation of detail and brilliant analysis he succeeds in making his subject really credible, or better, in making us feel we understand how Madame de Staël appeared to herself. That is a great achievement. Sensibility without sense, intellect without intelligence, one is almost tempted to think were the marks of this extraordinary woman. Mr. Larg shows the inadequacy of such a judgment. He disentangles the contradictions of her character—her pursuit of what she knew were the incompatible ends of fame and happiness, her insistence on the sanctity of marriage combined with her pursuit of a succession of lovers hardly yet fully enumerated. Most important of all he reveals the real significance of her early works in the development of her character, her use of writing as a means of escape. It is in the detailed working out of this conception that Mr. Larg is most strikingly original and successful. He shows us the models from whom Madame de Staël's characters were drawn and the function the writing of her plays and novels performed in her emotional history, how she sought compensation in literature for her difficulties and failures in life. Fatiguing results have often followed from the use of the details of an author's life to illustrate the text. In Mr. Larg's hands the opposite plan of illuminating the dark corners of a difficult character from her works has been pursued with brilliant success.

"It seems as if Madame de Staël was always young, but had never been a child," said her cousin. This is, indeed, the impression Mr. Larg allows her to make on us. Unconsciously she is experimenting with life and literature. Her real interest is self, and her method to follow her impulses. Ecstasy she believed to be the only road to the eternal verities. She fails to achieve that union of thought and emotion which in her definition is genius. She loves ideas more than thought. She has not yet become "a conscious personality capable of action."

Mr. Larg traces skilfully the steps to this consummation—her marriage, the revolution, Narbonne, and Constant, and the early works from the 'Reflections on Rousseau' to the 'Literature.' He makes clear also the development of her political ideas (such as they were), her belief in the combined rule of the intelligent of all parties, and her contempt for mediocrity. This progress of the Swiss banker's puritan daughter through emotional crises and passion to the realization of herself is a strange story, and it is told with an understanding love and sympathy which the subject seems often to deserve to forfeit. It is difficult not to be alienated by this "sensibility which takes pleasure in the spectacle of its own grief, and enjoys the very things which stir its tears." Gradually, however, she begins to face reality. She realizes her marriage is a failure, continues to believe that happy marriage is the only earthly paradise, and yet when ultimately freed by the death of "little de Staël" she preferred to write 'Delphine' and keep her liberty. Love and fame—these two continue to torment her—her thirst for both and her conviction of their incompatibility. Friendship, affection, religion were possible means of escape—but not for Madame de Staël. To her, friendship was love without its advantages. Instead she turns again to politics, but with little effect. Lastly, we find her writing 'Literature Considered in Relation to Social Institutions.' It does not live up to its surprising title and it is chiefly remarkable for its veiled allusions to Napoleon. Her knowledge was unequal to her ambition. She classifies literature as ancient or modern, northern or southern. She prefers Ossian to Homer and criticizes the grossness of Shakespeare. We leave

her at the critical point of her life. As Mr. Larg concludes: "We end on a question! With her character and her talents, what would she do next? What was there left for her to do?" We await Mr. Larg's second volume with eager interest. We trust he will be better served by his translator, who in the present volume, while generally competent, is unequal and sometimes clumsy. There is also a fair sprinkling of misprints.

THE TRAVAIL OF RUSSIA

Letters from Russian Prisons. Daniel. 10s. 6d. net.

THIS is the story of the suffering in Soviet prisons of political prisoners, Socialists, Syndicalists and Anarchists, men and women once the comrades of the very Soviet authorities who are now ill-treating them. No attempt has been made to estimate the punishment meted out to Tsarists and Radicals; but from letters and other first-hand information we learn of the horrors and cruelty which Russia's revolutionary government has inflicted on such of its former friends as have chosen to disagree with it. It is an unpleasant picture of studied brutality, reminiscent of the methods of Fouquier Tinville and the Jacobin tribunal of the "Reign of Terror." There are stories of men and women who suffered under the Tsar in the revolutionary cause, and who now confess that their treatment in the Kremlin and elsewhere is worse than anything they endured under the Tsarist regime. In the northern camps and in the prisons of the Solovetz Islands conditions seem even more grimly inhuman. The evidence seems to indicate that in these areas there are prisons in which prostitution is a necessary concomitant of imprisonment for women politicals, while examples of shooting of unarmed prisoners and of actual torture are also quoted. To enlarge upon the unsavoury details of the evidence is unnecessary: it shows how far the revolutionary regime is divorced from all conceptions of political liberty as that term is understood in England. It must not be imagined that these ill-treated Socialists despair of the world revolution: they all seem, like Mollie Steimer, intent on increasing the methods of revolutionary dictatorship even though at the moment they are the victims of such a system.

The volume is introduced by letters from what are rather naïvely described as "twenty-two celebrated Intellectuals," a term used to group such diversities as Mr. Arnold Bennett and Albert Einstein. They purport to represent the views of European and American Radicalism upon this aspect of Sovietism. Many of these letters, such as those of Mr. Brailsford and Miss Rebecca West, are pathetically reminiscent of the attitude of young English idealists a century ago to the French Revolution; in each case the new movement was welcomed as something shining and splendid which would put an end to corruption, and now the splendour reveals itself as a corruption no less hideous than the one it has replaced.

As a volume of evidence, judged from an historical standpoint, it must be admitted to be unsatisfactory. This indictment has been gathered at the request of the International Committee for Political Prisoners, an Association of Americans who stand for freedom of thought and expression. We are not told who acted as the Committee's agents in collecting the information, or what tests of authenticity were applied. The main body of the material consists of letters and affidavits obtained from Russia from the persecuted parties by officials in Europe. The "twenty-two intellectuals" were presented apparently with typed copies of the documents by Mr. Dan Isaac Levine, although his connexion with the American Committee is nowhere explained. Mr. H. G. Wells alone of the

twenty-two protested that he was not in a position to judge the authenticity of the letters. So many strange "documents" have come out of Russia that if this volume is to convince those sections of opinion in Europe and America which it would be most desirable to convince, more attention should be given to presentation of the material. But possibly the volume is addressed to Soviet tribunals to show them that this continued cruelty is losing for their regime the sympathy of those who were once its admirers.

ROMAN LONDON

Roman London. By Gordon Home. Benn. 15s. net.

THE history of Roman London is not only interesting of itself because there is so little of it written and so much to be surmised, but also because it begins with a puzzle: Why was there a Roman London at all when St. Albans and Colchester were important military centres? and ends with another: How did Saxon London come into being? Mr. Gordon Home has in this book provided us with answers to these questions which are at least in harmony with the few facts we have at our command, and with plausible reasons for their paucity. London was an entrepôt, a place of purely commercial value of no military importance. Celtic London—a dependency of Kent—became Roman London as Saxon London became Norman London and Yorkist London Lancastrian London, it fell naturally into the hands of the master of Britain. That there was a pre-Roman London there can be little doubt. Over two thousand years ago, long before the Romans landed, the south country was a rich and prospering agricultural community with a gold coinage (200 B.C.) carrying on a brisk overseas trade with its Continental neighbours, in which, apparently, a large amount of shipping was involved, fed by a network of roads. At the convergence of these roads on the Thames stands London. Its name is Celtic, the names of the places near it are Celtic, and its customs are, many of them, pre-Roman.

Written history being remarkably silent about London except when it had the misfortune to be mixed up in war, its historian has room for many excursions into polemics. Where did Caesar cross the Thames? is one of them. When was London Bridge first built? Why was the Watling Street of the City so named, when the real Watling Street ran up to Lambeth? Why do the City streets not coincide with the old Roman roads? The answers to these and many similar questions have to be given after a consideration of the discoveries recorded in the 'Victoria County History' and in a multitude of papers since that publication, and an imaginative reconstruction of Roman London checked by a severe archaeological critical habit of mind. It is in the critical sense that Mr. Home is weakest, as a comparison with Mr. Lethaby's 'Londinium,' to go no further, shows. Nor is he quite justified in the claim that he has collected all the remaining inscriptions. But the value of the book does not depend on these points: it lies in this, that Mr. Home has given us a complete picture of Roman London for the whole period of its existence and reconstructed for us its daily life. He has given a working explanation of how it continued to exist as a city between the end of the Roman occupation and the end of the sixth century, when we again hear of it as a flourishing metropolis. In this connexion, too, must be named the excellent chronological table compiled by Mr. Edward Foord, whose remarkable book on 'The Last Age of Roman Britain' is an important criticism of the received ideas on the subject. Mr. Home has given us a fascinating history of London, very fully illustrated from fact and fancy, in which archaeology and written record are ably blended to make an imaginative whole.

UGLY ADVERTISING

An Account of the Scapa Society. By Richardson Evans. Constable. 6s. net.

MANY people have not heard of the Scapa Society, though it has been doing solid and useful work since 1891. This is partly due to the abbreviation of its title, which conveys no hint of the "Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising." It is a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to the Beauty found in landscape and towns worthy of themselves. Mr. Evans has been the keenest of Honorary Secretaries for many years, and his record of work here is assisted by the annotations of several people of importance in the world of art, science, and letters. This leads to a certain amount of repetition, as he remarks, but that is one of the essentials of advertisement, which this Society against ugly advertising certainly deserves. It has had a stiff fight against the Philistine forces of trade and the pedantries of the law.

The practical English people have been called with some reason a nation of shop-keepers. They are not indifferent to the claims of English scenery, but they do not realize the positive benefit they derive from it; and they like to make a little money with a hideous hoarding which may conceal a fine view. Yet they will not wear the most widely advertised hat, if they do not like it. Why should they tolerate enamelled metalwork which is both unsightly and dangerous to those who make it? Afraid of their own emotions, they cannot talk about beauty, but they feel it. They would not go so far, perhaps, as the man Mark Twain mentions who added advertisements of Sozodont and Benzalene for the Blood to the massy, pyramidal rock of Schiller's monument. He came from

a land where any insolent that wants to is privileged to profane and insult Nature, and, through her, Nature's God, if by so doing he can put a sordid penny in his pocket.

Such lack of reverence is markedly American, and since America is always being put before us as the ideal place for smart business, it is pleasing to know that there, too, the brutish energies of the advertiser are being restrained. Over here, Scapa has achieved two Acts of Parliament, in 1907 and 1925, and has persuaded many local authorities to cherish the amenities of life. Mr. Evans wanders rather in his survey, and puts Victoria's first Jubilee in 1897; but he explains the various ways in which the law can be applied, and the difficulty of getting things done. The Press, which has been collared by the advertiser, ought, we think, to suffice those enterprising tradesmen who destroy beauty in regions where "only man is vile." As for towns, Scapa is assisting the newly grown conscience about buildings and hoardings hopelessly out of scale, if not unsightly, which spoil the unity which is beauty. Scapa, too, has always been tactful in its discussions with the other side, showing a patience which seldom belongs to the pioneers of a new movement.

The *Empire Review* for March has for its chief feature a paper on 'Should Submarines be Abolished?' by Admiral Sueter, who replies in the negative, but wishes their use to be regulated. Sir M. Amos discusses the long list of differences and agreements between 'French and English.' Mr. MacDonagh describes the changes in the dress of Members of Parliament and the oblivion into which the custom of wearing a hat in the House has fallen. Mr. Anthony Wharton's story relies for its effect on a needless horror. The notes on Science, Medicine, and Natural History are as interesting as usual.

The *Print Collector's Quarterly* devotes the current number to a combination of Prof. Hind's paper on Adam Elsheimer, describing his original etchings, an account by Mr. A. Belleruche of 'The Lithographs of Sargent,' including a very amusing one of Mr. Will Rothenstein done while the latter was drawing Sargent's portrait, a very fully illustrated paper by Col. Crookshank on 'Military Prints,' and an account by Mr. E. L. Allhusen of 'The Etchings of Edmund Blampied.' The editorial notes call attention to the fine collection of French drawings now on exhibition at the British Museum.

NEW FICTION

By L. P. HARTLEY

Rough Justice. By C. E. Montague. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d. net.

Other Eyes Than Ours. By R. A. Knox. Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.

The Best Short Stories of 1925. Edited by L. J. O'Brien and John Cournos. I. English. Cape. 7s. 6d. net.

'ROUGH JUSTICE' is a fine book—a fine up-standing book, one might almost say. Brown-ingesque and robust in tone, full of pity for the weak, of approval for the strong, hard on a few but tolerant towards most, in short living up to its title. Preoccupied with moral issues, it is concerned to show what sort of a figure its hero, Auberon Garth, made in infancy, in childhood, at his private and public schools, at Oxford and in the European War. Bron, as he was affectionately called, is a youth of good family, good physique, imaginative but slow-witted, tongue-tied but affectionate, indolent but trustworthy. He is an exceedingly good fellow; and Molly, the cousin and adopted sister with whom he was brought up, is very like him, large, blond, sane and beautiful. Morally and physically they are both in the pink of condition: there are moments when Mr. Montague, glorying in their healthiness, speaks with the voice of a trainer rather than of a novelist. Though we like them and would be sorry if they caught cold or took to drugs we do wish they would give us a little more uneasiness; there is a hint of virtuosity in their virtue, the impeccability of their performance moves us to admiration but not love. They do not blow their own trumpet, but Mr. Montague blows it for them and the sound makes one a little shy. Virtue can do without patronage. We do not quarrel with Mr. Montague's point of view, which is altogether admirable, but with its fixity; he has taken a stand, almost a stance, in the moralist's most inexpugnable retreat and fortified it as though he were on dangerous ground, the champion of Free Love, for example. A high moral tone defeats its own end unless, as Russian literature shows us, it is continually apologizing for itself; directly it becomes self-congratulatory it hardens into spiritual pride.

The most satisfying, if not always the most interesting, novels about the war have treated it as a catastrophe in the face of which human emotion and standards of value were paralysed. Mr. Montague, on the other hand, stands up to the war, faces it with his sensibilities quickened instead of stupefied; he is not content with presenting the conflict, he interprets it. And naturally, since he is a writer of a rare delicacy of feeling, his account, in detail if not in outline, is almost inexpressibly painful. The miserable end of Victor Nevin, a man of great intellectual promise, broken by the war, shocks us horribly because it is related, not as a mere incident of warfare, but as the negation of an ideal. It is an outrage against decency. All Mr. Montague's imaginative force goes into the description of Nevin's execution; it is perhaps the best thing, aesthetically considered, in the book, for though his restraint is sometimes artificial, his violence is always real. In the English scenes, excellent as they are, full of the sentiment of youth, of discovery and endeavour, there is a tendency to idolize the central figures, who have won Mr. Montague's approval; they look up to each other and we, we feel, must look up to them. It is as though a very united and exemplary family was letting the world into the secrets of its success. Toward this charmed circle Mr. Montague is all tenderness and awe; to outsiders, newspaper magnates, political hostesses, snobs, to anything and anyone which he calls "scrubby" he is ferociously un-

kind. But when he gets to the war he is more prepared to take people as he finds them; he excuses the short-comings of the poor, and the exquisite gallery of non-commissioned officers and men can swear and sin without incurring censure for being un-Garth-like. It seems ungenerous to labour this small point when Mr. Montague has brought to the making of his book a vitality, humour, sincerity and richness of observation which will give it a high place among the novels of the year: it could be read for its verbal felicities alone. It is packed with wisdom and, if its analysis of character is sometimes perfunctory, its analysis of sensation is exceedingly acute. It is a book of solid merit and a brilliant book. It detests cheapness and cynicism; but in revolting from these Mr. Montague has rallied to a standard which, we feel, promises to its bearers a fuller measure of moral comfort and security than is decent.

The satirist's first difficulty is to find a subject. The most well-worn plot will serve the novelist's turn; but the field that has once yielded satire must lie fallow a long time before it can be reaped afresh. For of its own nature satire impoverishes and poisons the soil from which it springs. It is for some reason far less capable of repetition than is the folly it chastises. The satire dies but the folly lives on, apparently inoculated against further attacks. Folly, being purposeless and directed against no one in particular, arouses no reaction; but satire, being an act of aggression, sets everyone, even neutrals, by the ears. The satirist is self-condemned to cleverness; if he stops scoring points he is a failure. And nothing is so difficult for the author or (in the long run) so bitterly resented by the reader, as the continual scoring of points. For each pin-prick, each wound inflicted on the victim reduces his vitality and capacity for squirming; to keep him alive and kicking the shafts must be skilfully graduated to suit his shorn hide; the *coup de grâce* must be husbanded to the last. Many satirists have vainly spent their energies flogging a horse which the neat venom of their early pages had prematurely put to death. And when satire fails to come off it has nothing left to recommend it; it is like a bad joke, simply boring and depressing.

Father Knox makes game of Spiritualism. It is good fodder for satire, topical, of general interest, and suspected of harbouring the vice of hypocrisy which has always been the satirist's Aunt Sally. A dabbler in wireless electricity collects a week-end party, some of whom are Spiritualists, and some not, to listen in to the spirit-world whose wave-length he has managed to catch. On both sides communications are given and received until, in a dramatic moment, a message from beyond the veil informs the party that one of their number will, between eleven-thirty and midnight, be painlessly de-materialized. It is a very good climax; but as a whole the story is too desiccated and the wit too dry to wring the withers of Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

There are several excellent pieces in the yearly collection of short stories edited by Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Curnos. The anthology is catholic and representative, neither high- nor low-brow. John Metcalfe's powerful and disagreeable 'Picnic' is among the most telling of the stories; Mr. Coppard's 'Fifty Pounds' among the subtlest. 'Red Hair,' by Princess Bibesco is a very amusing and finished piece of work; its *dénouement* is as surprising as it is satisfying. Mr. Strong's 'Storm' is also good. But perhaps the most interesting and profound of all is Mr. Grant Watson's curious study, 'The Diamond,' a fantastic idea worked out with much restraint and with an ultimate effect of mystery and beauty.

The *World To-Day* has a good list of articles, among which we may notice 'The Rush for Oil in Venezuela,' by Mr. T. F. Lee, 'The Case for the Super-Dirigible,' by Mr. P. W. Litchfield, 'Eyewash in Nigeria,' by Capt. Fitzpatrick, and 'Filming Mountain Moods,' by Mr. A. James.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Memoirs of Alexander Herzen. Vol. V. Chatto and Windus. 3s. 6d. net.

THIS valuable contribution to the history of the underground political movements of the middle of last century has now reached a period where it comes into touch with English politics. Herzen relates the story of Garibaldi's visit to London, which was intended to be a private stay with some aristocratic sympathizers. The people, however, took the arrangements into their own hands, and the enthusiasm of the crowds was so great that the English Government declared that Garibaldi had been taken ill and hurried him out of the country. Another chapter of the greatest interest deals with Bakunin, the first teacher of modern Anarchy.

Maistre Wace: a Pioneer in Two Literatures. By J. H. Philpot. Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.

DR. PHILPOT gives us in this handsome little volume the first lengthy study of Wace and his writings. Wace stands out in our memory as the historian of the Normans, who preserves for us the story of Taillefer riding between the ranks at Hastings chanting the Song of Roland and his peers, but he has much more serious claims on our respect. He seems to have had access to independent sources of information on early Norman history which go to establish the accuracy of Dudo, so constantly in dispute. Wace was the first popularizer of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and thus a source for the Arthurian romances, while his *Life of William Longsword* turns out to be pure history. Dr. Philpot brings out the superiority of Wace over his successful competitor, Benoit de Saint Maur, and gives us a number of specimens of his style; the original passages in an appendix, faithful and not unpoetical versions in the text. This is a book of permanent value.

The World in the Past. By B. Webster Smith. Warne. 10s. 6d. net.

THIS imaginative popular geology is the latest addition to the Wayside and Woodland Series. It is as informative, as well produced, and as excellently illustrated in colour and with photographs and drawings as the rest of them, but in one vital respect we are sorry to find a conspicuous deterioration. The outstanding merit of the series has always been that it contained books so useful and accurate that a serious student would not hesitate to trust them, and so simply written that they appealed to everyone. Mr. T. A. Coward on birds and Mr. Travis Jenkins on fishes are among the most successful books of their kind obtainable, and they owe a great deal to the fact that they make everything they touch as clear as daylight without seeming to be explaining it. But 'The World in the Past,' though it is as clear and competent as any of them, has a terrible atmosphere of being written down to its readers. Such phrases as "revealed in the Stone Book" and told-to-the-children stuff of that sort strike an entirely different note from the good straightforward language of the writers who have made the reputation of the Wayside and Woodland Series, and the change is undoubtedly for the worse. Nor will the number of readers likely to be attracted by this style compensate in any way for the loss. On this point the penny London newspapers are by far the best guide, and the publishers will find, even in these, unmistakable signs of reaction against popularization of this crude kind, indicating what is obvious in other ways, that the public is beginning to resent being written down to so obviously. The existing standard of the series is so well worth maintaining that we hope they will guard it jealously against the least tendency towards debasement.

The Standard Life Assurance Company, 1825-1925. By Sir William Schooling, K.B.E. Blackwood.

THE growth of the Standard Life Assurance Company from a small business to what is almost a national institution is followed in detail in this little book. The company is a Scottish one, and was started at Edinburgh in 1821 for insurance against fire; in 1825, however, it was decided to establish it as a life insurance company. In early days bonuses were high, but residence abroad meant a substantial increase in the premiums paid by clients. In 1845 these premiums were reduced and a Colonial branch was formed, which quickly became a thriving business. Between 1844 and 1878 the Standard absorbed nine other insurance companies and acquired, for the first time, a chief office in London. The Crimean War, when Income Tax was raised to the then awful figure of 1s. 4d. in the £; the Irish Land Bill and its possible effects on the security of Irish mortgages; the Franco-German War—all, of course, had their effect on the prosperity of the company. It survived them all and continued to prosper, while even the war of 1914-1918 and its aftermath appear on the whole to have increased rather than diminished the company's activities. Its present position, however, is the best comment on its achievements and its stability. This account is pleasantly written, and the author has allowed the romance incidental to the building up of a great business to predominate over the statistics and figures which might have made it so dull to the lay reader.

ACROSTICS

PUBLISHER'S PRIZE

For the Acrostic Competition there is a weekly prize:—A Book (selected by the competitor) reviewed in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the problem was set, presented by the publisher.

RULES

1. The price of the book chosen must not exceed a guinea; it must be named by the solver when he sends his solution, and be published by a firm whose name appears on the list printed on the Competition Coupon.

2. The coupon for the week must be enclosed.

3. Envelopes must be marked "Competition," and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.

Competitors not complying with these Rules will be disqualified.

Awards of Prizes.—When solutions are of equal merit, the result will be decided by lot.

Under penalty of disqualification, competitors must intimate their choice of book when sending solutions, which must reach us not later than the Friday following publication.

To avoid the same book being chosen twice, books mentioned in 'New Books at a Glance' (which, in many instances, are reviewed at length in a subsequent issue of the paper) are not eligible as prizes.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 210.

QUAINT PHRASE BELOVED OF PAM, ONCE ENGLAND'S GLORY.

1. Lured to destruction—see Micaiah's story.
2. Went to accompany travellers on their way.
3. Win he or lose, there'll be a bill to pay.
4. Alive I was, but now, alas, I'm dead!
5. The art of BEWICK you will please behold.
6. Abode of happy souls beyond the tomb.
7. Prized for his sword-shaped leaves and graceful bloom.
8. Mole-like he tunnels the eternal hills.
9. The tradesman gives it when we pay his bills.
10. 'Affected fineness.' (Used by Mrs. CRAIK.)
11. The art by which men ardent spirits make.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 208

GREATER AND LESSER: ONE IS IN THE EAST,
THE OTHER, A CELESTIAL FEMALE BEAST.

1. Hoofs, whole or cloven, are our point of pride.
2. Greece took my horses: in my camp I died.
3. Austere his life: in Persia he's respected.
4. By Sultans for high offices selected.
5. "You are the mid-day flower?" You rightly guess!
6. Abridge the spiral tongue that moths possess.
7. His was "the red fool fury of the Seine."
8. Sheet folded once, yea twice, and yet again.
9. The grants are passed: that I must bleed is plain!

Solution of Acrostic No. 208

U	ngulat	A	1	Iliad, Bk. 10.
R	hesu	S	2	The same as a Dervish.
S	of	I	3	The title is given to various chief officers,
A	g	A	3	whether civil or military.
M	esembry-	A	4	The Fig-marigold. There are about 300
an	themum	M	4	species. The name is compounded from
A	ntl	I	a	three Greek words meaning middle,
J	acobi	N	5	day and a blossoming.
O	ctav	O	5	Tennyson, In Memoriam, cxxvi.
R	atepaye	R		

ACROSTIC No. 208.—The winner is Mr. Noël M. Griffiths, 51n Holland Park, W.11, who has selected as his prize 'Home Life under the Stuarts,' by Elizabeth Godfrey, published by Stanley Paul, and reviewed in our columns on February 27 under the title 'Social History.' Twenty-five other competitors chose this book, 16 named 'Paradise in Piccadilly,' 10 'The Savoy Operas,' etc.

ALSO CORRECT.—Baitho, Mrs. R. H. Boothroyd, Carlton, Ceyx, J. Chambers, D. L., Dolmar, Doric, Gay, Glamis, Iago, Jorum, Kirkton, John Lennie, Lilian, Met, M. Story, Hon. R. G. Talbot, C. J. Warden, Zyk.

ONE LIGHT WRONG.—Barberry, A. de V. Blathwayt, Bordyke, Boskerris, Miss Carter, C. A. S., Challey, Lionel Cresswell, Darenth, East Sheen, Lar, Madge, Margaret, Martha, Novocrete, Oakapple, O.O., Peter, F. M. Petty, Quis, St. Ives, Varach, G. N. Woodd, Wulfruna.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG.—Baldersby, C. H. Burton, Mrs. J. Butler, A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, Dandog, G. M. Fowler, Gunton, Jop, E. L. Leek, L. M. Maxwell, G. W. Miller, N. O. Sellam, Mrs. Constance Punchard, Sisyphus, Stanfield, Stucco, Trike, Capt. W. R. Wolseley. All others more.

ACROSTIC No. 207.—Correct: Boskerris, Omega, Met. Two Lights wrong: W. C. H. Napier.

G.W.M.—Very glad to know that you prefer our acrostics to those in other periodicals on account of their more literary flavour.

TYRO.—Lysimachia grows near water, Lobelia Dortmanna actually in the water. See Hooker's 'Student's Flora of the British Islands,' or John's 'Flowers of the Field.' It is an aquatic plant, called in English "Water Lobelia," and "often forms a matted bed at the bottom of the water."

NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

THE most important of the current month's new records are those of Berlioz's 'Symphonie Fantastique,' issued in twelve parts by the Columbia Graphophone Company. The work is given complete, except for the omission of repeats which are never observed nowadays in actual performance, and is magnificently played by the London Symphony Orchestra under Felix Weingartner. Weingartner is the part-editor of the definitive edition of Berlioz's works, and there is no one who surpasses him in the interpretation of this symphony. The reproduction is good, except that, as usual in these new recordings, the tone is unpleasantly harsh. There is no doubt that one gets far more detail than of old and quite wonderful effects at the climaxes on these new records, but I find myself longing for something more nearly approximate to a real string-tone than this hard, metallic sound. But, apart from this radical defect, these records do give a very faithful idea of the symphony. The 'Marche au Supplice' is, perhaps, the best recorded, even as it is the finest movement. That wonderful piece of orchestration in the middle, where the tune is tossed from one part of the orchestra to another, is perfectly recorded even to the piano clash of the cymbals. The drum-rolls, on the other hand, both in this movement and in the storm section of the 'Scène aux champs' are rather disappointing; they sound too much like a tin tray being beaten. These six records are supplied in an album, in which are some notes on the work. These notes are admirable and give the listener just the right sort and right amount of information he requires. Our programme annotators could learn much from these expositions of symphonies and quartets issued by Columbia.

The notes provided in the album containing Beethoven's 'Kreutzer' Sonata in A major, which is the Gramophone Company's complete work this month, are also excellent and provide the owner with the thematic material of the work. It is played by Miss Isolde Menges and Mr. Arthur de Greef in a most competent, if rather uninspired fashion. I cannot say that either violin or pianoforte is perfectly reproduced: the one is rather shrill and hard, the other has the usual jangling tone; but these records will undoubtedly please anyone who wishes to possess this familiar work. The best of the new H.M.V. records is that of the Cathedral Scene from 'Faust,' sung by Chaliapin and Florence Austral with chorus and orchestra under Albert Coates. The dramatic effect of the scene and the "atmosphere" are reproduced to a remarkable degree, and, except for one short passage at the climax, the balance of the ensemble is admirable and the various parts clear. Chaliapin's peculiar timbre makes the voice of Mephistopheles sound remarkably like that of Boris, and, though he is supposed to be singing in French, it is impossible to catch his words; but it is fine singing. A similar record of the finale of Act I in 'Lohengrin,' by an English company under Sir Hamilton Harty, which is in the Columbia list, is less successful.

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Preliminary Examination on May 3rd and 4th.

Intermediate Examination on May 5th and 6th.

Final Examination on May 4th, 5th and 6th.

Candidates desirous of presenting themselves must give notice to the undersigned on or before March 25th, 1926.

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BY ORDER OF THE COUNCIL,

A. A. GARRETT,
Secretary.

50 Gresham Street,
London, E.C.2.

'Saturday Review' Acrostics: 13.3.1926

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Dear Miss Duke,
I have just read "Scotland's Heir," and am astonished at its excellence. This sounds patronizing, but, quite honestly, the art of historical writing is just now under a cloud, and its good exponents are rare.

The two qualities that strike me in your work are (a) your atmosphere (b) your creation of character. The Prince, Lord George, Elcho, Sheridan, Clementina—they are all quite unforgettable.

Go on and prosper! You should have a great career in front of you.

Yours in admiration. (Signed) HUGH WALPOLE.

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CITY NOTES

Lombard Street, Thursday

ALTHOUGH the stock markets appear to be recovering from the heavy liquidation of last month there are no signs of a permanent return of activity. This is not surprising. Rarely has a period been so replete with factors each one of which has an important bearing on the financial position, and therefore on the stock markets. At this time of year conjecture is generally busy with the Budget. Mr. Churchill has departed from the usual reticence of Chancellors and has announced that he expects that the surplus of one million pounds estimated for the Budget will be realized. His statement has been met with criticisms and storms of protest from many different directions. It is argued that the cost of the coal subsidy, estimated at about eighteen million pounds, should be included in the Budget and thus turn Mr. Churchill's one million surplus into a deficit of seventeen million. From the point of view of the financial purist this may be academically true. I submit, however, that Mr. Churchill is perfectly correct in the statement that he has made. His surplus, which consists of the balance of receipts over expenditure, is clearly defined. It might have been clearer if Mr. Churchill had stated that he budgeted last year for a surplus of fifty-one millions, fifty of which would be utilized in redeeming a portion of the National debt; and that taking the coal subsidy into consideration his Budget would result in a surplus of thirty-three million, of which only thirty-two million would be available for debt redemption. The stress that is being laid on this is, in my opinion, unnecessary. Everyone has known that the coal subsidy was costing about eighteen million pounds and no one imagined that this amount could have been made up out of revenue.

THE FRANC

In financial circles in France the crisis of last week-end is said to have been political and in political circles to have been financial. M. Briand indeed seems to have presumed too much on the docility of the Chamber. In the first place he violated the constitution—in the opinion of many—by sending his "express train" to the Senate; he then reintroduced his Finance Bill with the tax on payments, previously rejected by the Chamber; and finally by announcing his departure to Geneva on the following day and that of M. Doumer to London two days later he tried to frighten the Chamber by the awful consequences that would ensue if the Bill were not passed.

What is the existing situation? France is without a Budget. In May about Fr. 6,200,000,000 of Treasury Bonds fall due and it is believed that more than half the holders have given notice that they will not renew. The Moroccan and Syrian campaigns have yet to be paid for. The debt negotiations with England are in abeyance and no arrangement has yet been made for repaying the United States. The refusal to come to terms with the United States last year was the greatest blunder that has been committed. When at last a Government can neither borrow outside the country nor inside there remains only the alternative of printing more notes. In view of the gravity of the situation and the obvious probability of further inflation it must surprise many people that the franc does not depreciate more rapidly to a level much lower than the present one. Theoretical considerations seem to recommend a "bear" speculation in francs, but pure

theory overlooks the fact that the franc is a "managed currency." The French Government can use the credits at its disposal to support the exchange at any time, and in fact it often does come in as a buyer of francs whenever a sharp fall takes place. The speculation on the franc exchange extends for the most part to a few hours only, and it is the interventions of the Government and the covering on the part of the "bears" that produce the quick oscillations in the exchange level. "Bear" speculators have not forgotten their experience in the spring of 1924 under the Poincaré regime and they realize that taking long views on the franc is not a speculation but a gamble.

NEW ISSUES

So many new issues of importance are being discussed that the question arises whether we run the risk of indulging in the dangerous expedient of over-lending. There would appear no probability of interest rates falling, which is a somewhat serious matter in view of the conversion operations to be carried out by the Government. Not merely is Europe likely to be a big borrower, but the Colonial Governments have large requirements to be met. It is estimated that New South Wales will want to borrow a further twelve millions this year. So far, in the last ten years the New South Wales debt has risen by ninety million pounds; the Queensland debt by forty million pounds; the Victoria debt by nearly sixty million pounds. These figures give food for thought, and the question arises as to whether the Colonial Stock Act which brings these loans within the category of trustee securities does not need amendment.

THOMAS TILLINGS

The rise in Thomas Tilling shares of late is a striking example of how desirable it is to have patience where good investments are concerned. About a year ago, on a disappointing dividend, Tilling shares fell to about 45s., the pooriness of the dividend being due to an ultra-conservative policy. A dividend should be declared shortly, and the shares are now 61s. 3d.

SWEDISH MATCHES

When the report of Swedish Matches is issued, in the course of the next two or three months, I am informed that an exceptionally strong position will be disclosed. The present price of Swedish Match B. is 12½, and I think these shares an excellent industrial lock-up for twelve months or so.

THE PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE CO. LTD.

The figures of this great insurance company for 1925 are astonishing—total income £37,552,553; claims paid during 1925 exceeded £14,000,000; assets £185,140,143. These are vast sums, and one begins to realize the part which the big insurance companies play in the life of the country. The business expansion of the Prudential is particularly remarkable since the war, and it testifies to the growing belief on the part of the public in the value of insurance, and for an ever increasing number of purposes. Endowment assurance is growing greatly in popularity. It is interesting to note the reduction of the expense ratio of the Prudential, which has fallen from 36.92 per cent. of the premiums in 1921 to 26.59 per cent. last year. The total collectible premiums at the end of the year, according to the Chairman's speech, were equivalent to £319,176 per week and of this amount little more than 1 per cent. is now being collected under the commission system.

TAURUS

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The National Memorial to Queen Alexandra

Their Majesties the King and Queen have graciously approved that the National Memorial should be associated with a further endowment of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, its Affiliated Associations and its Long Service Fund for its Nurses. A small proportion will be devoted to a visible Memorial.

Addressing the Queen's Nurses at Marlborough House in 1901, Queen Alexandra said:—

"I can indeed imagine no better or holier calling than that in which you are engaged of tending the poor in their own homes in the hour of their greatest need."

In her last message sent within a few days of her death, she said:—

"I am glad to take this opportunity of wishing prosperity to the Institute, with my earnest hope that the financial outlook may continue to improve so that it may be enabled to carry on unchecked its beneficent work which is of such vital national importance. Please accept and convey to my Committee and to all Workers my best thanks for all they are doing to promote the good cause which is so near to my heart."

Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to the National Memorial Fund, and be sent to the Head Office, Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, 58 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1, for England and Wales; 63 George Street, Edinburgh, for Scotland; and as regards Ireland, to the Head Office of the Irish Branch, 36 South Frederick Street, Dublin, or to the Lord Mayor of Belfast, City Hall, Belfast, or to any local organization authorized to collect for the Fund. Donations may be allocated to a particular county or district.



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P.1267

MOTORING

THE SUNBEAM RACER

BY H. THORNTON RUTTER

IT is greatly to the credit of the Sunbeam Motor Car Company, of Wolverhampton, that they try their utmost to better the breed of mechanical horses for the private carriage. It was unfortunate that Major H. O. D. Segrave was unable to create fresh speed records on the Southport sands recently. That, however, is a mere detail, for it is the constant effort to test out new designs that brings permanent improvement in the ordinary motor carriage for daily use. Thus in the new twelve-cylinder Sunbeam racer a vee-type engine is fitted whose cylinders are of small dimensions, their total capacity being under four thousand cubic centimetres.

* *

Ordinarily, cylinders of this size are fitted in the ten horse-power four-cylinder rated cars; yet in this Sunbeam, with three times the number of explosion chambers, the horse-power developed is three hundred, in place of a theoretical seventy-five, assuming that the ordinary four-cylinder ten horse-power car develops twenty-five horse-power at its best speed. The engine of this racing

motor-car consists of two blocks of six cylinders arranged at an angle to each other, and two overhead cam shafts arranged at an angle of forty-five degrees to the axis of the cylinders operating the two valves to each cylinder through finger tappets.

* *

A supercharger mounted on the forward end of the engine draws through a Solex carburettor and delivers the mixture under pressure to centrally placed induction pipe with vertical branches connecting the pipe to the various intake parts of the twelve cylinders. An "explosion" branch leads to the outside of the bonnet of the car, in which a release pressure valve is fitted, so that in the event of a back-fire the supercharger is relieved of almost all strains.

* *

Two magnetos are provided, one for each block of six cylinders, and the usual oil and water pumps for lubrication and cooling. The total weight of the car with its stream-line racing body is 15 cwt., and the rear axle wheel reduction has been arranged to give a speed of one hundred and sixty miles an hour when the engine is turning over at five thousand revolutions per minute. As, however, the power curve of this engine shows a straight line upwards to six thousand revolutions per minute, theoretically a higher speed is quite possible.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1925

ORDINARY BRANCH. The Premium Income amounted to £762,249. The number of Policies issued in this Branch was 13,705, assuring (after deduction of Re-assurances) the sum of £2,141,588, at annual premiums of £106,735 and single premiums of £41,590.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH. The Premium Income amounted to £2,088,670.

GENERAL BRANCH. The Premium Income in respect of the first year's operations amounted to £18,420, all of which was re-insured.

TOTAL INCOME. The Total Income of the Year excluding the General Branch amounted to £3,403,658, being an Increase of £290,908 over the previous year.

CLAIMS. The Claims Paid amounted to £1,108,408, bringing the Total Claims Paid by the Company up to £20,012,608.

TOTAL FUNDS. The Total Funds amount to £10,797,602, being an Increase of £1,235,664 over the previous year.

VALUATION. The Annual Valuation of the Life Assurance Business made by the Actuary disclosed the following surpluses:

Ordinary Branch	-	-	-	-	£240,591
Industrial Branch	-	-	-	-	£148,521

Ordinary Branch Policies in the Immediate Profit Class will receive in respect of this Valuation a Reversionary Bonus at the rate of

£2 per £100 assured

The Company transacts all classes of Life, Fire, Accident, Motor, Employers' Liability and General Insurances.

Enquiries Invited.

J. MURRAY LAING, F.I.A., F.F.A.
Secretary and Actuary.

JNO. A. JEFFERSON, F.I.A.
Chairman and General Manager.

The Austin Twelve

IMPORTANT PRICE REDUCTIONS

THE economies resulting from the improved methods in production which enabled the Austin Motor Company to reduce the prices of its 20 h.p. models in November last have now been made effective in the case of the 12 h.p. models.

In order to give the public the earliest possible benefit of these economies the reduced prices here announced became operative on March 1, 1926, at Works.

CLIFTON TOURING CAR	£295
HERTFORD 2-SEATER	£315
WINDSOR SALOON	£395
IVER SALOON	£405
GORDON SALOON	£425
MULLINER SALOON	£365
HARLEY COUPE	£425
BERKELEY LANDAULETTE	£425

The AUSTIN MOTOR CO., Ltd., Longbridge Works, BIRMINGHAM

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THE 13 H.P. 4-DOOR SALOON

PRICE **£298**

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13 H.P.

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Four-Seater £260

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or fixed head) £285

4 Door Saloon £298

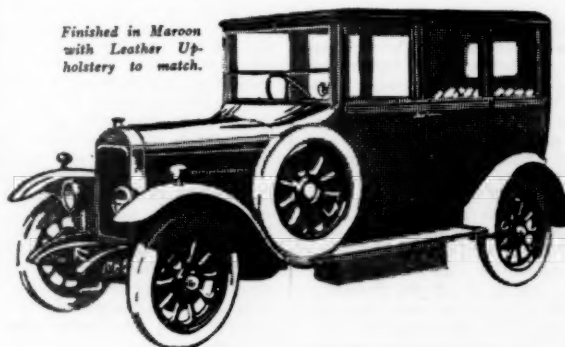
11 H.P.

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Driven Electric Horn,
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Wiper, Driving Mirror,
Dash Lamp, Calometer,
etc.

Every Component on the
Clyno Car is British
throughout and not
merely assembled in this
Country.

Company Meeting

THE UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC RAILWAYS COMPANY OF LONDON LIMITED

The ANNUAL MEETING of the Proprietors of The Underground Electric Railways Company of London Limited was held at 55 Broadway, Westminster, S.W.1, on Thursday last, The Right Hon. Lord Ashfield (Chairman) presiding.

The Chairman said: In presenting to you the report and accounts for the Company for the year 1925, I do not intend to dwell at any length upon the traffic situation in Greater London. I have already dealt with this subject at the meeting of the shareholders of the Common Fund Companies and of the London and Suburban Traction Company, and the remarks which I then made are available if you wish to have them.

If you will turn to the balance sheet you will see on the credit side that you are interested in stocks and shares of subsidiary companies to the extent of £14,934,000 in round figures. This shows an increase of £167,000 over the previous year, and is attributable to the purchase of 110,000 Ordinary shares of the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Company. This should be an advantageous investment, as the North Metropolitan Power Company are engaged in a lucrative business of supplying electricity for power, lighting and other purposes over a large area in North and East London and the adjacent counties. Owing to the development of the demand for electricity they have decided to embark upon the construction of a new power house, and have found it necessary to raise further capital for this and other purposes, and the shares purchased by your Company will, in part, provide this further capital. On the debit side you will observe that the Temporary Loan has increased by £60,000 to £660,000. This further sum was used towards the purchase of the shares to which I have just referred.

It is unnecessary for me to remind you that these provisions for the distribution of profits have never been called into operation for the very simple, but unfortunate, reason that there have never been any profits to divide. For about 24 years a sum of £5,000,000 has been invested in a system of transport for Greater London without earning a single penny for those who made this huge investment. Those who hold the Contingent Certificates have experienced a similar disappointment.

But I am prompted to believe that better times are before us, and that the prospects are more favourable than they have been at any other time in your Company's history. If you will turn to the Revenue Account once again you will see that your Company is getting into a position in which the chances of a dividend are distinctly encouraging. The amount which we carry forward in our accounts is now £146,000. It has grown slightly each year. But what is more important, the prospects of our subsidiary Companies are growing brighter and the results of our conservative policy in past years are beginning to bear fruit.

As you know, this Company owns a factory at Walthamstow which is used for the purpose of building omnibus and lorry chassis. It began in a small way some years ago and has gradually widened its activities until it has now reached a position of considerable importance in the motor industry. It employs a very large number of men, and builds vehicles which in design and construction are second to none in this or any other country. But the factory is out of date, and it has been decided to erect a factory which will permit the use of the very latest machinery and equipment and the most up-to-date methods of manufacture. We hope to have the new factory in operation at the end of the present year. You will have observed on page 11 of the report and accounts that the Associated Equipment Company made a profit last year of £68,000, but having regard to the commitments of the Company it was thought prudent not to make any distribution of this sum by way of dividend. I shall be disappointed if the results for the current year do not justify the payment of a dividend.

I do not desire to bore you with too many statistics, but I must use a few figures for the purpose of illustrating the magnitude and importance of the undertaking with which you are so intimately connected. You will find the relevant statistics at the bottom of pages 10 and 11 of the report. You will observe that the passengers carried by all Companies—railways, buses and trams—totalled no less than 1,837 millions, an increase of 96 millions, or 5½ per cent., when compared with the previous year. The miles worked totalled 253 millions, an increase of 14 millions, or 6 per cent. To perform this service these Companies own or lease 72 route miles of railway, 113 miles of tramways, while the buses operate over 801 miles of roadway. They own 118 stations and 43 garages, 1,588 railway cars, 574 tramcars and 4,359 omnibuses. Since 1921 the passengers carried by your group of Companies have increased by no less than 440 millions, or roundly 32 per cent.

What has our group of Companies done to meet this rapid growth? I think we can safely say that they have more than kept pace with the increase. Since the war ended we have been engaged upon a programme of expansion, development and improvement which will, with the exception of the Piccadilly Circus Station, be practically completed this next summer. When this programme has been completed this group of Companies will have invested a further 22 million pounds in London transport.

Schools

ST. NICHOLAS' SCHOOL, LITTLEHAMPTON, SUSSEX PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS.

Prospectus on application to Headmaster—Mr. P. A. Maynard.

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For particulars apply to the Bursar.

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Apply Headmaster.

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JUNIOR SCHOOL FOR BOYS BETWEEN 7 and 14 Terms strictly inclusive.

For Prospectus apply to the Headmaster: Rev. Adrian Taylor, O.S.B., M.A. (Cantab.) or the Abbot, Right Rev. T. E. Egan, O.S.B.

Company Meeting

HARRODS LIMITED

CONTINUED PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY

The thirty-sixth ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Harrod's, Ltd., was held on Monday last at the Company's premises, Brompton Road, S.W.

Sir Woodman Burbidge, Bt., C.B.E. (Chairman and Managing Director), said that the trading results for the past financial year showed continued progress and prosperity. The company had established another record in the total net profit earned, namely, £803,047, an increase of £58,414. The most encouraging feature in this connexion was that the larger net profit was the result of increased trade, and this applied to both the Brompton Road and Manchester businesses. The directors recommended a final dividend of 12 per cent. on the ordinary shares, making 16 per cent. for the year, an increase of 1 per cent. They were adding £25,000 to reserve, bringing that fund up to £745,709, and carrying forward £87,456, as compared with £30,286 brought in. The company's stocks had never been in a more satisfactory condition; they had never had a better and more up-to-date assortment, nor had they ever been able to make a better appeal to the public on quality and price than was the case to-day. The rate of turnover again showed a satisfactory increase; this meant that they avoided the accumulation of old and out-of-date stocks, and customers could therefore rely upon getting fresh and up-to-date goods and merchandise. The Company's financial position was even stronger than a year ago, the liquid assets totalling £1,162,270, an increase of £73,500.

There could be no doubt that the good year the Company had had was largely due to the important extension of premises, with the increased selling space brought in, the re-grouping of the various sections of the business, and changes in many of the departments. He invited shareholders to make a tour of inspection, especially of the furniture galleries, and he was sure they would agree that for variety, value, good taste, and effective display there was nothing to equal it in any London retail store. This section of the business had shown marked progress during the past year, and had, he believed, good prospects of doing an increasing trade in the future. He had seen every leading store on the Continent and in North America and South America, and could say with confidence that the Company's Brompton Road store was second to none in the world.

At their Manchester branch (Kendal Milne and Co.) the trade for the year showed a very satisfactory increase, with a corresponding advance in net profits.

As to the prospects of the current year, personally he was optimistic, as there were good reasons for taking a hopeful outlook.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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STOLL PICTURE THEATRE, KINGSWAY

Daily from 2 to 10.45 (Sunday, from 6 to 10.30. New Programme).
Next Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. (March 15, 16 and 17.)

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"EXCHANGE OF WIVES"

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Next Thursday, Friday and Saturday. (March 18, 19 and 20.)

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Miscellaneous

BOOKS.—The Tatler, First Edition, 4 vols., 1710, rare,
£3 3s.; Tom Paine's Political and Miscellaneous Works,
1819, 2 vols., 42s.; Mrs. Jameson's Works, Sacred and
Legendary Art, etc., 6 vols., full Morocco gilt, £4 10s., cost
£15; Burton's The Kasidah, illus. by John Kettlewell, 6s. 6d.;
Posthumous Poems, by Algernon Chas. Swinburne, edited by
Gosse, 1917, only 300 done, 30s.; Sportsman in Ireland, 1897,
25s.; Vizetelly's Mermaid Series, Old Dramatists, 19 vols., scarce,
£5 5s.; Rothenstein's 24 Portraits, 13s. 6d.; pub. 25s.; Alken's
Coloured Prints, "Cockfighting," 4 for £15, 1841; Burton's
Arabian Nights, illus., 17 vols., Best Edition, £15; London
Tradesmen's Cards of the 18th Century, by Ambrose Heal, 1925,
£2 2s.; The Uncollected Work of Aubrey Beardsley, 1925,
£2 2s.; The Masculine Cross and Ancient Sex Worship, 8s.; Les
Aventures du Chevalier De Faublas, best large type edit., 2 vols.,
illus., Paris, 1842, £3 3s.; The Novellino of Masuccio, trans. by
Waters, illus., 2 vols., 1895, rare, £6 6s.; Sporting Magazine
from 1826, with many rare plates, 27 vols., bound in 22, £10
10s.; Hannay Sex Symbolism in Religion, with an Appreciation
by Sir George Birdwood, 2 vols., 25s.; J. M. Barrie's Works,
"Kirriemuir" Edit., 10 vols., scarce, £7 7s.; Scott's novels,
fine set, "Dryburgh Edition," 25 vols., £3 3s.; Thackeray's
Works, nice set, 12 vols., £3; R. L. Stevenson's Works, "Vail-
ima" Edit., 26 vols., £38. Send also for Catalogue. 100,000
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Bright Street, Birmingham. **BOOKS WANTED:** Crawley's
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Happy Hypocrite, paper covers, 1897; Yet Again. 1st Edit.,
1909; Caricatures of 25 Gentlemen, 1896; Boydell's History
River Thames, 2 vols., 1794, Erewhon, 1872; Erewhon Revised,
1901; Way of all Flesh, 1903.

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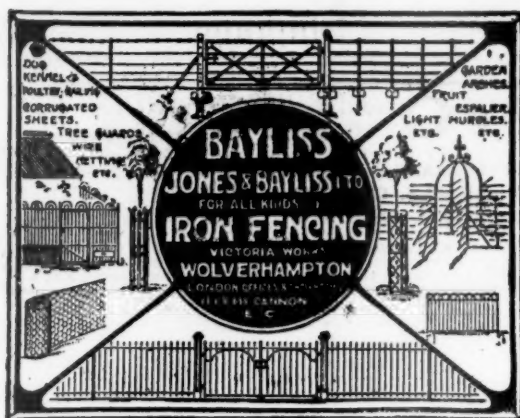
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